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June '97

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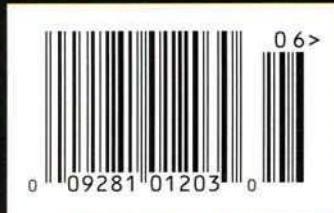
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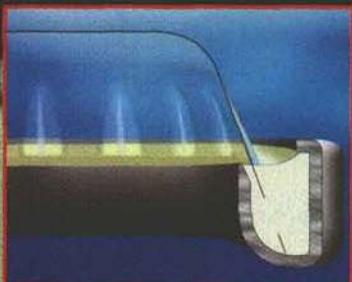
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# contents



## Lenny White

Playing bebop behind past masters...contributing to Miles' fusion revolution... producing today's jazz greats Lenny White has been there, done that—but he isn't done yet.

by T. Bruce Wittet

**64**

## In Search Of The Perfect Ride Cymbal

No other piece of drum gear prompts tales of mystery and imagination like the ride cymbal. An *MD* special report on the voice, the pulse...the soul of drumming.

by T. Bruce Wittet

**102**

## CHAD GRACEY

Chad Gracey might be happier bragging about his newly renovated home than about his drumming, but for thousands of Live fans, Gracey's unique approach to the drumkit is what they really want to hear about.

by Matt Peiken

**48**

## Adrian Young

As a budding young drummer, Adrian Young used to jam along to tapes of his favorite local band, No Doubt. Today he's the man providing the big beat behind this year's biggest darlings of MTV, VH1, FM radio, and magazine covers throughout the land.

by Robyn Flans

**84**

## **education**

- 120 **ROCK 'N' JAZZ CLINIC**  
Put Your Hands And Feet Together  
by Ralph Humphrey
- 122 **DRUM SOLOIST**  
Steve Gadd: "Antigua Boy"  
Transcribed by Matt Kern
- 124 **OFF THE RECORD**  
Ahmir-Khalib Thompson:  
Do You Want More?  
by Johnny Rabb
- 126 **ROCK PERSPECTIVES**  
Four-Over-Three Ostinato  
by Ken Vogel

- 132 **TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS**  
The Drummer As Recording Artist  
Part 1: Sales & Promotion  
by Hal Howland
- 142 **IN THE STUDIO**  
Behind The Glass: Kevin Shirley  
by Mark Parsons

## **profiles**

- 18 **SHOW DRUMMERS' SEMINAR**  
Bring In 'Da Noise's  
Leroy Clouden  
by Ken Micallef
- 148 **ON THE MOVE**

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## **equipment**

- 38 **NEW AND NOTABLE**
- 40 **PRODUCT CLOSE-UP**  
Remo Mondo Drumkit  
by Rick Van Horn
- 43 Noble & Cooley SP Snare Drums  
by Rick Mattingly
- 45 New Regal Tip Sticks  
by William F. Miller
- 136 **FROM THE PAST**  
A Century Of Innovations  
by Cheech Iero



## **news**

- 14 **UPDATE**  
Billy Martin, Beck's Joey Waronker, Buddy Williams,  
and Ben Harper's Oliver Charles, plus News
- 154 **INDUSTRY HAPPENINGS**

## **departments**

- 4 **EDITOR'S OVERVIEW**
- 6 **READERS' PLATFORM**
- 32 **ASK A PRO**  
Jonathan Mover and Doug "Cosmo" Clifford
- 34 **IT'S QUESTIONABLE**
- 146 **DRUMLINE**
- 150 **CRITIQUE**  
Chick Corea, Roy Haynes, and Billie CDs, Peter Erskine book,  
Paulo Mattioli hand-drumming videos, and more
- 156 **DRUM MARKET**  
Including Vintage Showcase
- 160 **DRUMKIT OF THE MONTH**



# More From The Book Division

I recently had the pleasure of completing my second contribution to the growing *Modern Drummer* Book Division—and the most recent addition to our Library—a tutorial called *Progressive Independence*.

*Progressive Independence* was written for the jazz drumming student, and I hope teachers will find it useful for teaching basic jazz drumming skills. Though I used the material in various forms with my own students for many years, the inspiration to document it came from a discussion I had with Joe Morello regarding the problems involved in teaching coordinated independence. Following that conversation, I decided to finally put the approach into book form. It was the beginning of nearly a year's worth of work, from the first draft to the final printing.

For those unfamiliar with the topic, "coordinated independence," as applied to jazz drumming, is the ability to play vari-

ous rhythmic figures between the snare and bass drums against a consistent time pattern on the ride cymbal and 2 and 4 on the hi-hat. Each limb, in essence, eventually becomes completely "independent" of the others.

*Progressive Independence* enables the student to develop this skill through a series of graduated exercises that first work the snare drum and bass drum individually against the time pattern. Ultimately, snare and bass drum *combination* rhythms are placed against the uninterrupted time flow of ride cymbal and hi-hat. Though this can present quite a challenge for students at the onset of study, with practice, the cymbal and hi-hat parts begin to function on their own with little conscious thought, allowing the player to devote full attention to the varied snare and bass drum rhythms.

Coordinated independence is essential for any serious student of jazz drumming.

The more fluency one has with the technique, the more effective one becomes at supporting and responding to the music. Once the ability has been developed, "comping" behind a jazz soloist becomes a rather simple matter, as does accentuating ensemble figures in a big band environment without disturbing the time flow. Developing the ability, however, does take time, practice, and patience, and that's what *Progressive Independence* is all about.

My sincere thanks to *MD* editors Bill Miller, Rich Watson, and Adam Budofsky for their valuable assistance and suggestions, to Scott Bienstock and Javier Jimenez for a super layout and cover design, to Rick Mattingly for his masterful engraving skills, and, of course, to Joe Morello for the inspiration.

*Ron Spagnardi*

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**MODERN DRUMMER** magazine (ISSN 0194-4533) is published monthly by **MODERN DRUMMER Publications, Inc.**, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. PERIODICALS MAIL POSTAGE paid at Cedar Grove, NJ 07009 and at additional mailing offices. Copyright 1997 by **MODERN DRUMMER Publications, Inc.** All rights reserved. Reproduction without the permission of the publisher is prohibited.

**EDITORIAL/ADVERTISING/ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES:** **MODERN DRUMMER Publications**, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Tel: (201) 239-4140. Fax: (201) 239-7139. E-mail: moddrum@intac.com

**MODERN DRUMMER ONLINE:** [www.moderndrummer.com](http://www.moderndrummer.com)

**MODERN DRUMMER** welcomes manuscripts and photographic material, however, cannot assume responsibility for them. Such items must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Printed in The United States

**SUBSCRIPTIONS:** U.S., Canada, and Mexico \$34.97 per year; \$56.97, two years. Other international \$41.97 per year, \$63.97, two years. Single copies \$4.95.

**SUBSCRIPTION CORRESPONDENCE:** Modern Drummer, P.O. Box 480, Mt. Morris, IL 61054-0480. **Change of address:** Allow at least six weeks for a change. Please provide both old and new address. Toll free tel: (800) 551-3786.

**MUSIC DEALERS:** Modern Drummer is available for resale at bulk rates. Direct correspondence to Modern Drummer, Dealer Service, P.O. Box 389, Mt. Morris, IL 61054. Tel: (800) 334-DRUM or (815) 734-1214.

**INTERNATIONAL LICENSING REPRESENTATIVE:** Robert Abramson & Associates, Inc. Libby Abramson, President, 720 Post Road, Scarsdale, NY 10583.

**POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to Modern Drummer, P.O. Box 480, Mt. Morris, IL 61054.

**MEMBER:** Magazine Publishers Of America  
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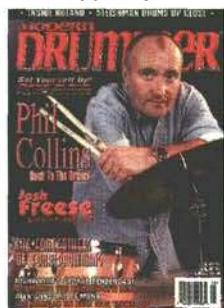
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**PHIL COLLINS**

Thanks for the March '97 cover story on Phil Collins. I'm glad to see that Phil hasn't lost touch with drums, and I'm excited about his two new releases (especially the big band stuff). The article was well-written and inspiring.

Casey Korder  
Seattle, WA

I enjoyed the Phil Collins story from first page to last. I was honestly not aware that besides singing and writing great music, Phil was also such an amazing drummer. I'm now inspired to run out and buy those Genesis albums. Phil obviously helped invent a style of drumming that is copied today by drummers across the world. Thanks, Phil, for inspiring me.

Patrick Boylan  
via Internet

Good article on Phil Collins. However, you didn't point out some of the finer moments in *live* drumming in which he was involved. His duets with Chester Thompson are the only examples of dual drums where you can honestly say the playing has the feel of one mind (one drummer). Their individual patterns and musical "job responsibilities" were perfectly laid out, and the effect was not only single-minded, but *extremely* powerful.

Andy Rothman  
Plantation, FL

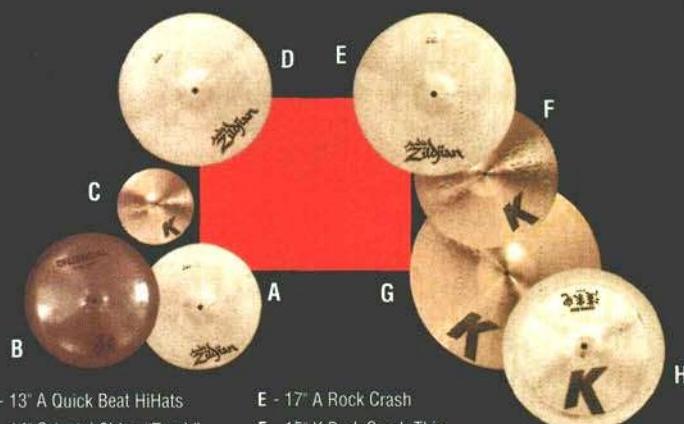
**GEORGE PENDERGAST**

In your interview with George Pendergast of Dishwalla in the March '97 issue, he (sadly) sums up the music industry of the '90s: "I used to be a 'finesse guy.' But now I have more fun if I just bash it out and don't worry about it."

Music would actually be going places if more drummers (and bands) *did* "think about it" as they played. Unfortunately, the music-buying public is supporting these acts and turning them into gods as they coast through careers that are likely as financially rewarding as they are musically mundane.

To his credit, Mr. Pendergast does show a smidgen of guilt at his sellout: "Aw man. But I'm having fun." Mr. Pendergast, think back to your early influence from Buddy Rich, and ask yourself if he ever just "bashed it out without thinking." I hope your answer would be "*not likely*." It's also fun to be a perfectionist, and to actually care about what you are playing. If we, as

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drummers, all felt that it did not matter what we played, there would be no need for teachers, or for magazines like *Modern Drummer*.

Let me close by saying I am thankful that Mr. Pendergast is not a surgeon.

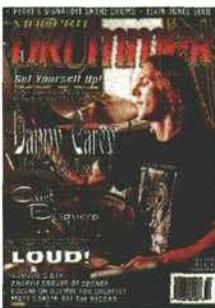
Dave Pelletier  
Brandon, Manitoba, Canada

## THE LORD GIVETH...

I am writing to praise *Modern Drummer* for your "true tolerance" and fair coverage of non-mainstream drummers. Specifically, I have noticed for years that you note what certain Christian drummers—like Paul Leim, Robert Sweet, Louie Weaver, Will Denton, and Ted Kirkpatrick—are doing. Most people's definition of "tolerance" means that they fight for what they want (amidst cries of "tolerance") and exclude what they dislike. I appreciate your inclusion of this small group of professional drummers.

Michael Plew  
Ontario, CA

## ...AND THE LORD TAKETH AWAY



After recently turning my life over to Christ, the Lord asked me to cancel my subscription to *MD*. I was somewhat saddened, because I'd been a lifelong subscriber (I'm now thirty-three) and I did enjoy the magazine. But the Lord showed me why *MD* is so objectionable.

The last issue I received had Danny Carey of Tool on the cover. At the beginning of the article, the author stated that Carey had a giant Enochian magic board behind his kit, walls decorated with slanted crosses, demonic figurines, "symbolic passageways into the fourth dimension," etc. All of these things are demonic and of Satan. Then the Lord reminded me of past things I had seen in your magazine, such as a death metal roundtable, a picture of a death metal drummer wearing an upside-down cross, the Tama ad with Lars Ulrich

using profanity, etc.

You must remember the influence you have on young readers. (I began reading *MD* when I was thirteen.) The drummers you feature, especially on the cover, are often idolized and emulated. I'm not suggesting you feature only Christian artists; I realize you have a business to run. But I feel you could be more selective about who you feature, what language is printed, the content of the ads, etc. This would not only raise the quality and moral fiber of your publication, it would also uphold your responsibility to your young readers and their parents. Young musicians need positive role models, not bad influences.

Ronald Cooke  
Sellersburg, IN

## ALEX GONZALEZ

I'm a foreign exchange student from Colombia, and I've just started enjoying *Modern Drummer*. I was glad to see an interesting article about Mana's Alex Gonzalez in your March issue. Alex is one

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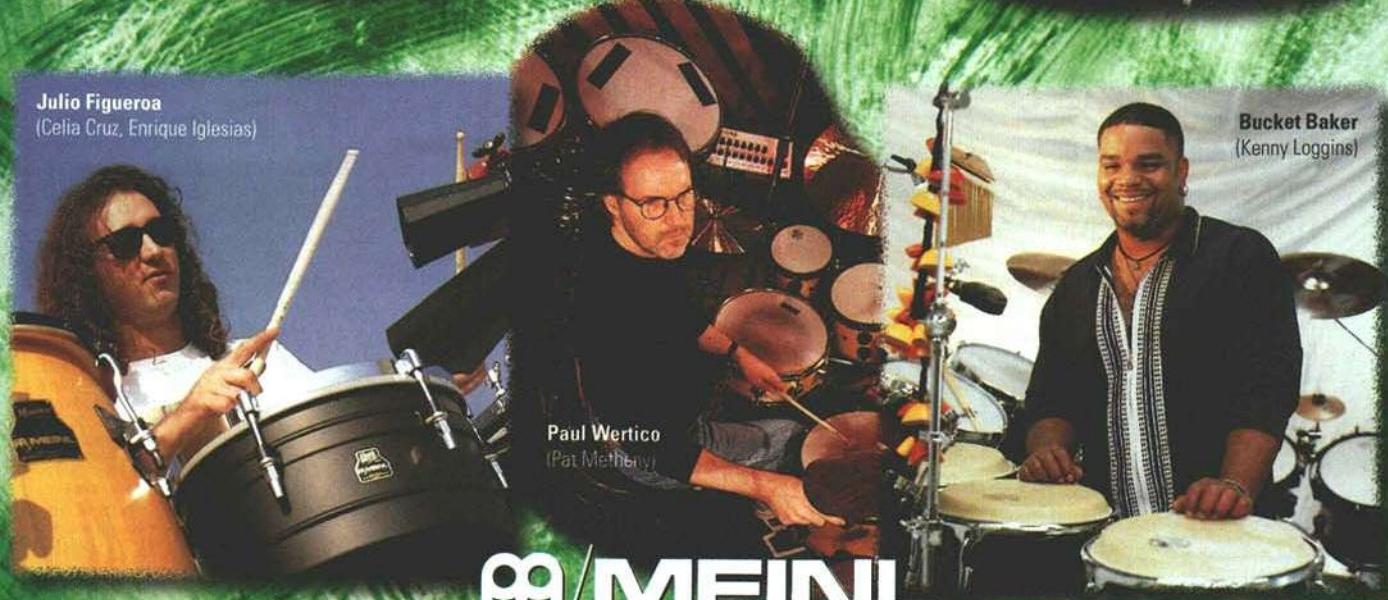
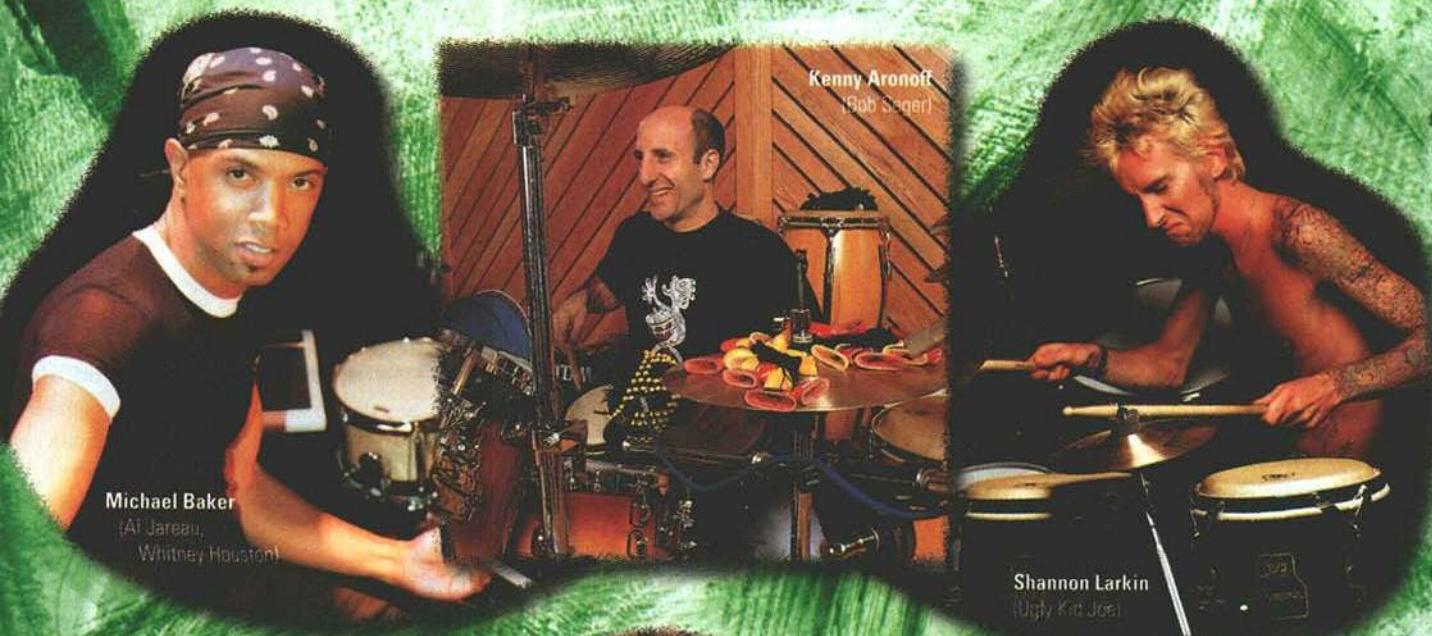
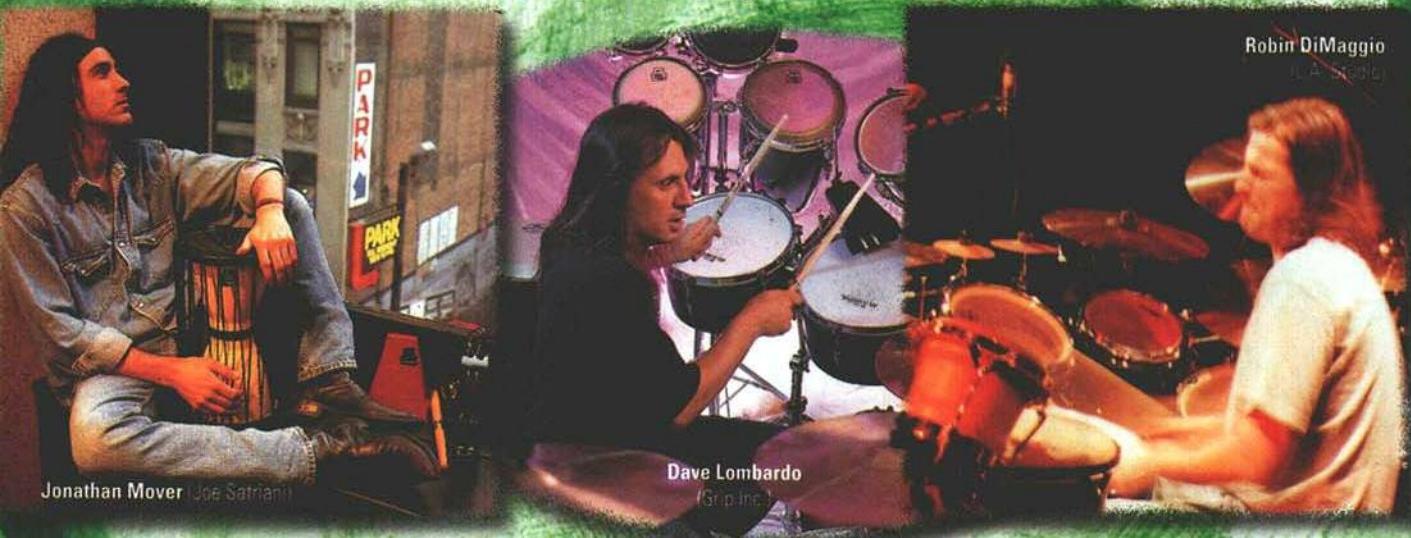
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of my favorite drummers. I've heard him several times, and I believe that he is one of the most powerful (and crazy) drummers in Hispanic America. During each concert Alex captivates the audience with his crazy stage antics. But at the same time, he is an excellent and very professional player; his ideas and technique are just right. Thanks to *MD* for exposing Hispanic American talent, and congratulations to Alex on this important recognition.

boba  
via Internet

It was a pleasant surprise to read about a contemporary Latin rock drummer like Alex Gonzalez. Rock En Español has been alive for more than a decade, and there are many more Latin rock drummers that I and many other Latin-rock-influenced drummers like to read about. Keep up the international reports.

Vinny Quiroa  
Newport, RI

Thanks for expanding our geographic and musical borders to bring us stories from all genres and nationalities. One need only check out Alex Gonzalez of Mana to hear some good fusion-inspired rock without pretentiousness. Thanks for introducing me (and all of us) to another incredible, respectable person and player.

David Conaway  
Deer Park, TX



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# BILLY MARTIN In His Little Grass Shack

trio has turned their tin-roofed island jam hut into a recording studio, flying in noted engineer David Baker and a plane-load of gear to produce the buoyant *Shack-Man*. "I had to play a lot lighter in the shack," Martin says of the experience, "because you can hear a pin drop in there. Drums cut a lot more than an organ or a bass, so I had to be careful."

The song "Bubblehouse" is typically hard-grooving MMW, with subtle but vital tinkering with time and dynamics. "Basically I'm doing the tempo changes and they're listening to me, but we all have to be listening to each other to make it work," Billy insists. "That song represents how we play as an ensemble, and how we can arrange a piece without really talking about it."

"Lifeblood" features a highly creative rhythm part that employs a brush-and-stick pattern that was recorded totally live, and some overdubbed Engelhart percussion. "I've got a brush in my right hand, playing a tom, and my left hand is playing a cross-stick pattern on the snare and going around the toms and a cowbell in a syncopated pattern. It's a maracatu and a baião—basically my version of a Brazilian rhythm," he explains. On "Think," the drummer plays a crisp solo, which he says he was happy with "because it was to the point and melodic.

I'm always striving to speak through the drums in a melodic way. And it worked out."

On *Shack-Man*, Martin played an old Rogers kit that belongs to a friend on the big island, Carl Green. "He's had them in his tree house for ten years. Bob Moses and I used to go up and play the set—swinging in the trees, looking at the ocean," laughs Martin. "Those drums felt so good. They're really funky-looking—dusty and partially rusting—but

the sound is so melodic. One tom has only one head, and the other two have double heads. The bass drum has one head, and the snare is a very ring-y Gretsch. And the cymbals are really old Zildjians. The kit

has this weathered sound that has a lot to do with who played them and where they've been hanging out."

**Robin Tolleson**

Michele Macioce



Midway through "Hotwax," one of the many standout tracks on Beck's second Geffen album, *Odelay*, a somber voice intones, "I am the enchanting wizard of rhythm, and I came here to tell you about the rhythms of the universe." As with all of Beck's complicated sonic tapestries, it's difficult to say where this particular sound bite came from. But if you're wondering about Beck's own personal wizard of rhythm, look no further than drummer Joey Waronker.

The son of long-time Warner Bros. Records executive Lenny Waronker, Joey grew up in Los Angeles surrounded by music. Folks like Randy Newman and Brian Wilson regularly stopped by the house, but dad wasn't thrilled when Joey started playing air drums along with his KISS records. "The last thing he wanted his kids to do was follow in his footsteps," Joey says, laughing. But his father relented and bought him a drumset.

Joey first made his name on the alternative rock scene as a member of Walt Mink, an eclectic power trio that formed in the early '90s. He recorded two albums with the group for Caroline Records, developing an unusual style of polyrhythmic drumming. While other drummers concentrate on double bass drum techniques, Waronker plays double hi-hats. He's kept this unique setup with Beck, using one set of 15" Paiste Sound Edge

hi-hats and another of 8" cymbals. To mix it up even more, he plays 8th notes on one pedal with his heel and 16th notes on the other with his toe. "That's my trick," Waronker says. "I started doing it in Walt Mink because I didn't want the arrangements to be typical rock arrangements, and I was trying to figure out ways to do as much stuff as possible live. It was just experimenting, but it worked."

Beck encourages such experimentation in his music, which throws genres such as funk, hip-hop, and avant-garde rock into a postmodern blender. While many of the rhythm tracks on *Odelay* are sampled drum loops, Waronker augmented them in the studio with live drums and percussion overdubs. On stage, he either duplicates the loops on drumset, or plays along to a click track and tape, adding fills or percussion on top. "It's the kind of thing where if I want to do something crazy, Beck is always open to it."

**Jim DeRogatis**

## Beck... And Call

# BEN HARPER'S OLIVER CHARLES

Oliver Charles actually laughs out loud when asked about his punk background. "Oh, yeah. I grew up listening and playing in punk bands, rockin' out and having fun. It's still a big love, but I don't really play it too much anymore." The joke, in case you're scratching your head, is that Oliver Charles is now the drummer behind the electric-slide folk of Ben Harper. And even though Harper can bend a song out there sometimes, it sure ain't punk.

Although his dad is the legendary Chili Charles, who showed up recently on the Brian Wilson and Van Dyke Parks release *Orange Crate Art*, Oliver says he didn't start taking the drums seriously until about two years ago. That was after spending a couple years playing in punk bands, three years in a reggae/ska band, and some time with an acid-jazz combo. In fact, it was during his weekly gigs with the acid-jazz combo that his life changed, because that's when Ben Harper bopped through the door. "I had never seen him or heard his music," Oliver admits. "I'd only heard his name from a couple of other people. I didn't know what to expect—but I was definitely blown away when I heard him."

Harper was impressed with the young drummer and asked Charles to join him in the studio, which was a big change for the then-nineteen-year-old. "I wasn't aware of the long hours and the concentration that would be put into recording. Before it always seemed like I'd count it off, and there it was. But it was definitely a learning experience. I got kind of a kick in the butt to work a little bit harder. Everybody was pulling their own, and I had to be up there pulling it with them." At the end of all that hard work came the 1995 release, *Fight For Your Mind*, followed by a nearly non-stop, two-year tour.

Punk roots notwithstanding, Charles is no slouch behind his Yamaha sunburst Custom Recording kit, throwing in equal measures of his acid-jazz experience and the sparseness of his punk days. Through it all he says the best thing he ever did was enter the studio and start the tour with one simple thought: "I came in with the attitude that I could learn a lot from these guys. I was real quiet, and I listened to what they had to say."

David John Farinella

# BUDDY WILLIAMS

## Studio Precision On The Road

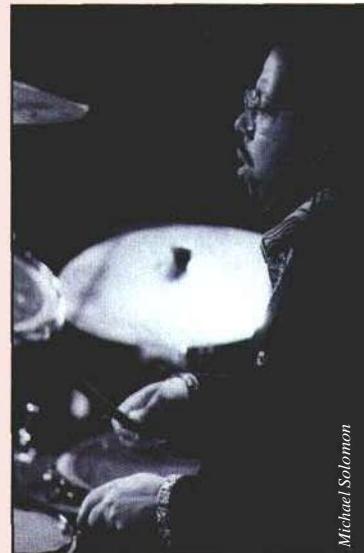
The rap on drummer Buddy Williams is that he only plays ballads. Not true, says the forty-five-year-old Brooklyn native and resident—though he admits the deep-pocket grooves he played on Luther Vandross and Roberta Flack records may have mistakenly fixed some listeners with that idea.

To get the bigger picture, you might want to check out Williams' live work with guitarist-crooner George Benson. At an average concert, Williams charges through a set list that runs the gamut from crossover fusion ("Breezin'"), to groove-oriented dance numbers ("Give Me The Night"), to straight-up '50s rock 'n' roll tunes (Chuck Berry's "Sweet Little Sixteen"), to straight-ahead jazz (Wes Montgomery's arrangement of "Night In Tunisia"). And yes, there are ballads too, like Nat King Cole's "Unforgettable."

On stage, Benson's intense pace keeps Williams on his toes. "There's no set list," the drummer says. "On any given night, he may play a song at any tempo. He goes by the audience. It's always funny; he'll call one song, and a split second later, he's already off thinking about another one. So I don't watch the audience; I'm just looking at George."

Williams has worked with Benson before on recording dates. In fact, when he's not touring with the guitarist, Buddy keeps a steady schedule of studio work on many projects, from jingles to pop dates. (Check out his work on Michael Jackson's *HISStory*.) But after being asked to play full time with Benson on numerous occasions, the drummer eventually took the plunge. His reason? "George Benson is a living legend," Williams simply states. "Yeah, you have to play the same songs every night, but he makes it fresh, so you have to come up to him."

Charles Levin



Michael Solomon

# NEWS

**Gregg Bissonette** is on albums by Steve Lukather and Andy Summers, as well as on Pat Boone's heavy metal LP, *In A Metal Mood*.

Drummer **Gary Craig** and vibraphonist **Gary Burton** are on Bruce Cockburn's *The Chanty Of Night*.

**Dan Thompson** is on Protein's debut release, *Ever Since I Was A Kid*.

**Joey Castillo** is on the road with Glen Danzig.

**Toss Panos** is on records by Kristine Blonde, Lily Haydn, Paul Rodgers, and Tim Donahue, and on the music for the TV show *Big Easy*.

**Scott Garrett** is on records by the Holy Barbarians and Ian Astbury.

**Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez** has been performing recently with McCoy Tyner's all-star big band, as well as with Michel Camilo.

Percussionist **Mino Cinelu** has been touring Japan with Kazumi Watanabe, performing in France with Kenny Barron (with whom he's recently collaborated on an album titled *Swamp Sally*), and writing music for films *Ed Moses* and *Colors Straight Up*.

**Andy Kravitz** has been in the studio recording tracks for a list of artists including Candy Butchers, China Forbes, G. Love, Dahveed, Jon Bon Jovi, and Paul Hardcastle.

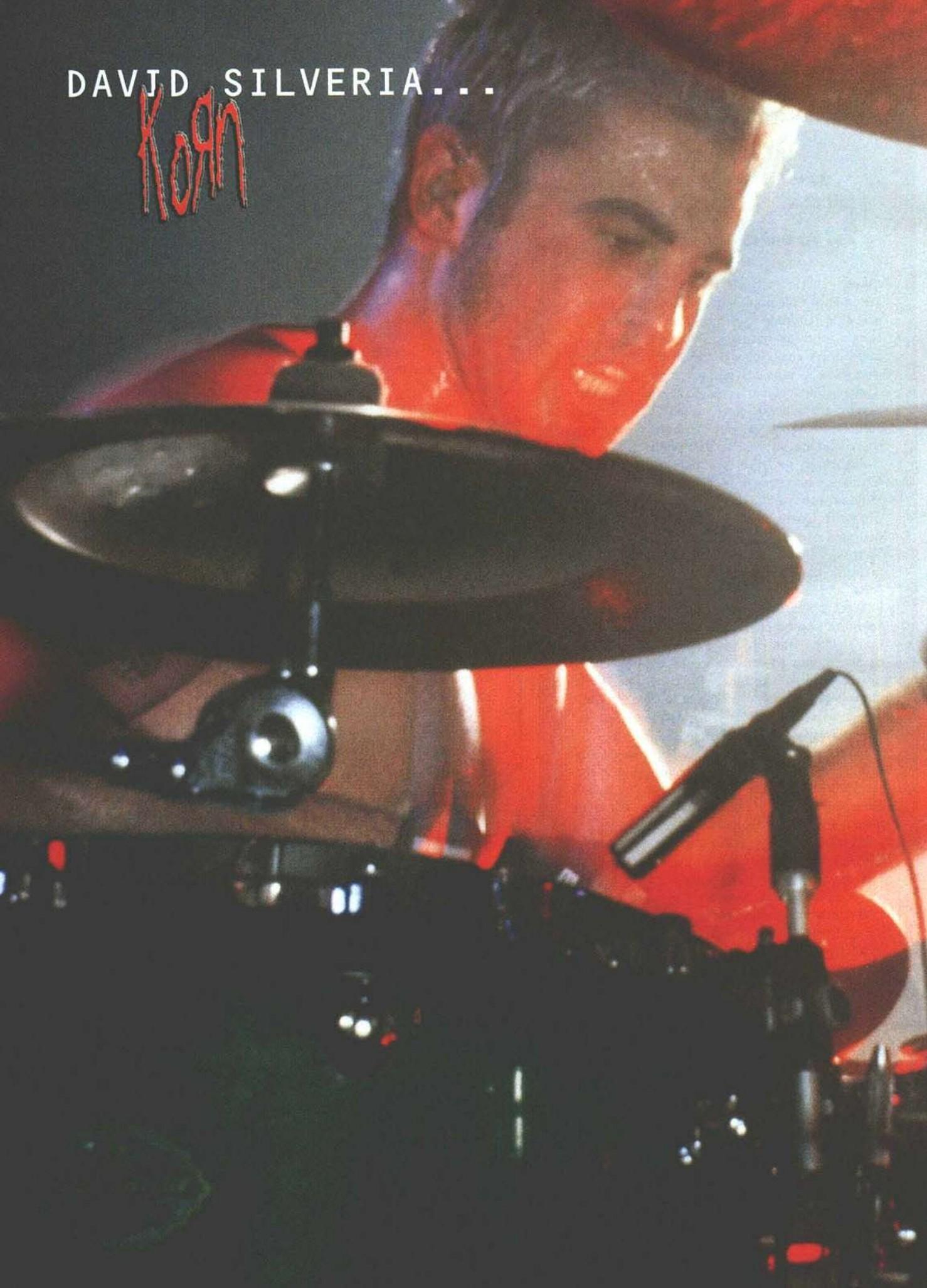
**Ed Shaughnessy** was recently on the first of three tours scheduled with the Doc Severinsen Big Band.

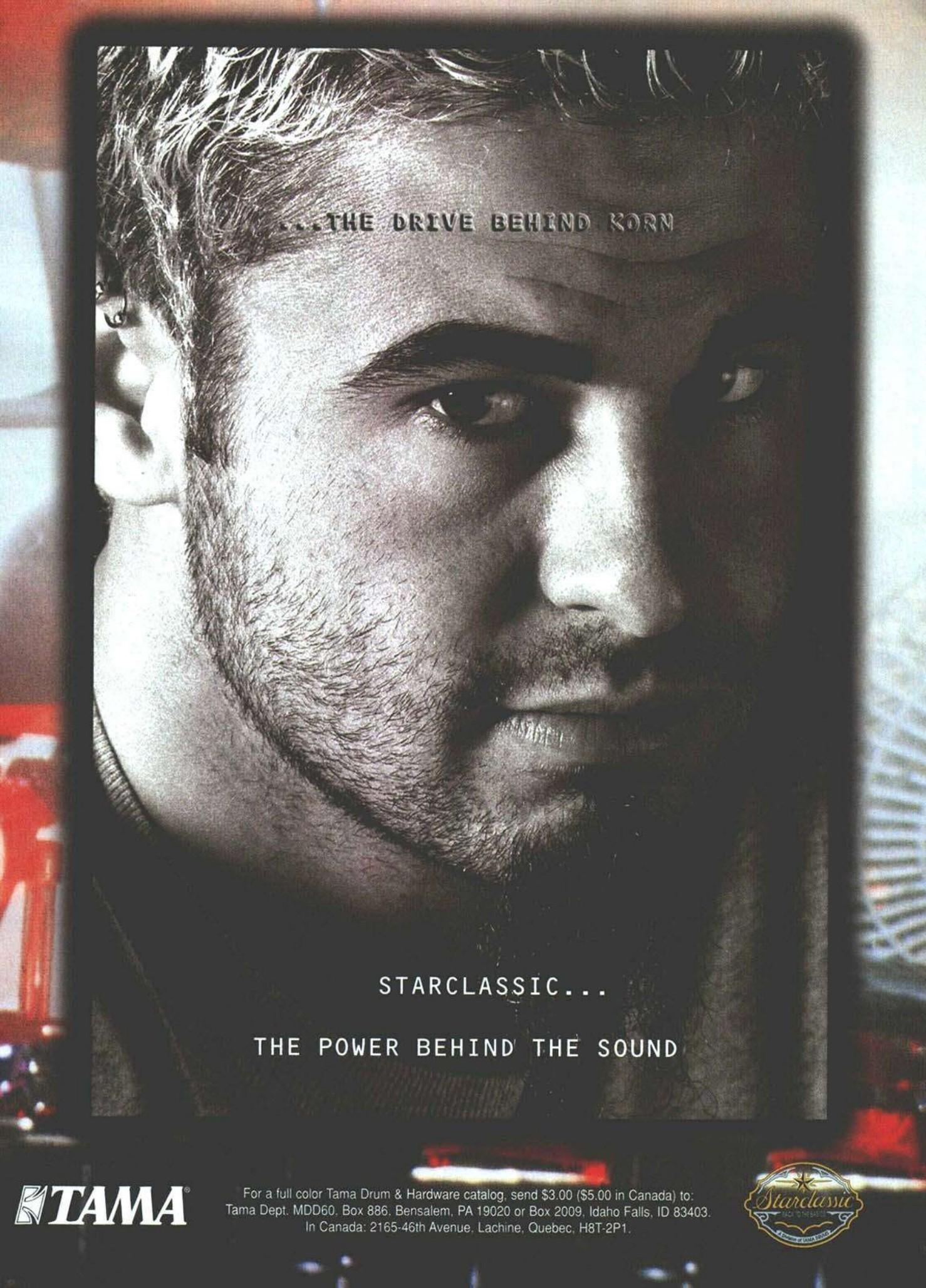
Apologies to **Bob Harsen**, whose name appeared as Lee Harsen in the February '97 issue, and to bassist **Scott Thunes**, whose name was misspelled in our feature article with Josh Freese in the March '97 issue.



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# LEROY CLOUDEN

by Ken Micallef

**W**ith *Bring In 'Da Noise, Bring In 'Da Funk*, Broadway theater-goers have had their senses smoked and their principles challenged. The show has been an amazing success for the past two years, telling the history of the African diaspora through the performances of four stunning tap dancers and two bucket drummers, prodded on by the sensitive drumming of Leroy Clouden.

Led by tap phenomenon Savion Glover, *Noise/Funk*'s cast offers a stunning treatise on rhythm. Clouden, a veteran of numerous shows and multiple recording sessions, has the daunting task of keeping this rhythmic hailstorm under control. From below the stage, deep in the orchestra pit, he plays percussion and drums (catching cues from Glover and musical director Zone Mark) while his monitor blasts a combination of vocals, Glover's tap assaults, and the bucket drummers' fusillades.

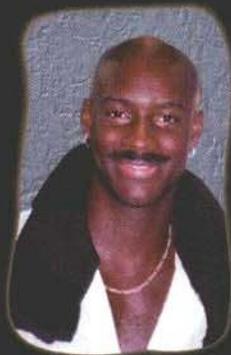
Years on the New York scene prepared Clouden for his Broadway duties. But long before Broadway beckoned, Clouden was juggling styles and building a reputation. He played fusion with legendary jazz organist Larry Young, Brazilian funk with Herbie Mann, alterna-rock with the B-52's (*Cosmic Thing*), twisted ethnic jazz with Lenny Pickett & the Borneo Horns, sophisticated pop with Donald Pagan (*Kamakiriad*), and most recently, stomping R&B with Slo Leak, a formidable group that includes bassist Harvey Brooks and guitarist Danny Kortchmar.

A veteran of the turbulent New York '70s scene that produced Steve Gadd, Steve Jordan (a close friend), Chris Parker, and Charlie Drayton, Clouden is a skilled technician and versatile interpreter. His ability to handle many genres while retaining a sense of personal style helped him enter that elite club of drummers to work with Steely Dan. And like those musicians, Clouden has his tales to tell.

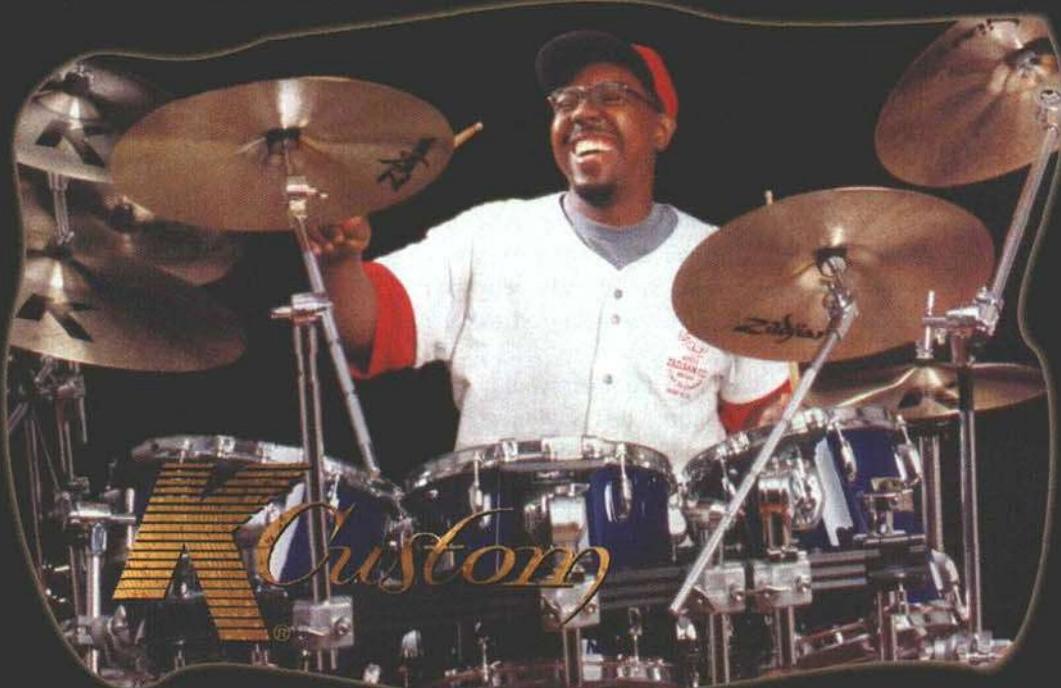


# "Smitty is always pushing the envelope. And he does it with intense passion and a love for drumming."

*Sonny Emory on Marvin "Smitty" Smith*

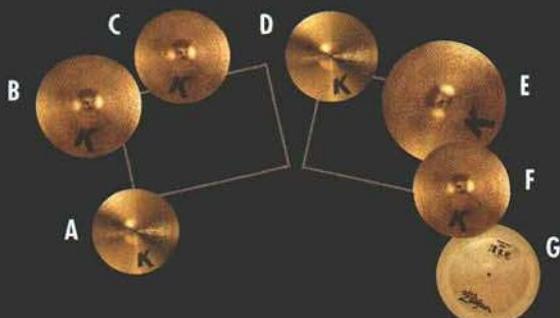


"Smitty is an incredible player and person. Those qualities have to go hand-in-hand. That makes Smitty all the more inviting to the listener. Smitty is always pushing the envelope, seeking new experiences. And he does it with intense passion and love for drumming."



## Smitty's Tonight Show Set-up:

- A. 13" K/Z HiHats
- B. 17" K Custom Dark Crash
- C. 15" K Custom Dark Crash
- D. 14" K Dark Crash Thin
- E. 20" K Custom Medium Ride
- F. 16" K Custom Dark Crash
- G. 16" A China High with 6 rivets



## Marvin "Smitty" Smith on Zildjian:

"I rely on my musical sensibility to select cymbals. All Zildjian's cymbal ranges blend well together, but I prefer the K's and new K Customs. I really like their melodic tone row. The bell on the K Custom Medium Ride has great tone, it really cuts and at the same time has 'body'. The K Custom Dark Crashes have a sound that's unique to Zildjian."

"The K/Z HiHats are, in my opinion, one of Zildjian's best creations ever. The crisp sound, real definition, and overall wash create a warm but powerful sound."

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**KM:** How does playing a show that involves so much emphasis on rhythm affect you as a drummer?

**LC:** It began with rehearsing with Savion Glover, the other dancers, and the conductor, Zane Mark. They would work out the routines, and I would set up some type of rhythmic background. As the routine evolved, we built it from that. The two bucket drummers, Raymond King and Jarret Crawford, were there too.

**KM:** Do you find yourself playing less than you would in another show, since there is so much going on rhythmically with *Bring In 'Da Noise!*

**LC:** For me, the most important thing is to keep the time going. During the rehearsals we were all close together, but when we moved the show to the Public Theater, there was a separation. We're in the pit and the dancers are on stage. Zane wanted me to portray the style of the music and also keep the time there. I had to learn the language of what Savion was doing.

**KM:** Why do you think this show knocks out so many people?

**LC:** I think it has to do with the expression of tap and the different ways the emotion comes through tap. I've never been in a show where tap dancers are portrayed in an emotional setting that can show violence, anger, compassion, and joy. Also, the music covers a lot of ground. People can reflect on what it was like in the '70s, the '50s, or the '40s, and identify both with the music and the experience of what was going on in each time period.

**KM:** Do the tap dancers improvise, as a drummer would?

**LC:** They do, but there are also routines that Savion worked on that are established in the show. In one scene Savion trades fours with the other dancers, which is called "hitting." What it means, as he says in his narrative earlier, is that if you can do a four- or eight-bar phrase and another person who is *not* a dancer can understand what you did, then you "hit." The rhythm becomes so strong and clear that the audience becomes connected—in the same way you become connected to a singer's high note, or a dramatic line from an actor. The whole point is to connect with the audience.

Savion has reinvented tap in a certain way, so it's rhythm tap. That is more from the waist down, instead of from the waist up; it's not so show business-oriented. Savion's thing can be more intense and aggressive.

**KM:** What does all that tap sound like down in the pit?

**LC:** I have to have a strong ear to listen, because there is a delay. And I have to concentrate because I get cues from Savion that I can't count on being the same at every show. The tempos change from night to night. It's really on me, 'cause I have to react to what Savion establishes from the first scene.

**KM:** Have you traded fours with Savion as you might with another musician?

**LC:** Yes. Savion has said that sometimes he approaches tap like a drummer: using one foot like a bass drum and the other as



Photo: Robert

the snare. And he does play drums. More than that, his concept about rhythm comes from his dance predecessors. His ability to put together patterns in a certain way is amazing.

I've stored rhythms that I can use in the future just by hearing the dancers. But a lot of my responsibility is to stay focused day in and day out. When I hear certain things I might want to respond, but in this style you can't do that too much. The taps *sound* like part of the band, but they're not. I'm setting up a foundation for them to work on, and it's not always cohesive enough to shift and improvise. If I do that it may throw the dancers off. But I do other jobs where I have to work with a click, which has made my time strong enough to let me set up a pocket within myself. They can do anything they want, but I have to rely on my time. I think of them as singers or musicians. I have to maintain my focus.

**KM:** Your background is not exclusively in show drumming.

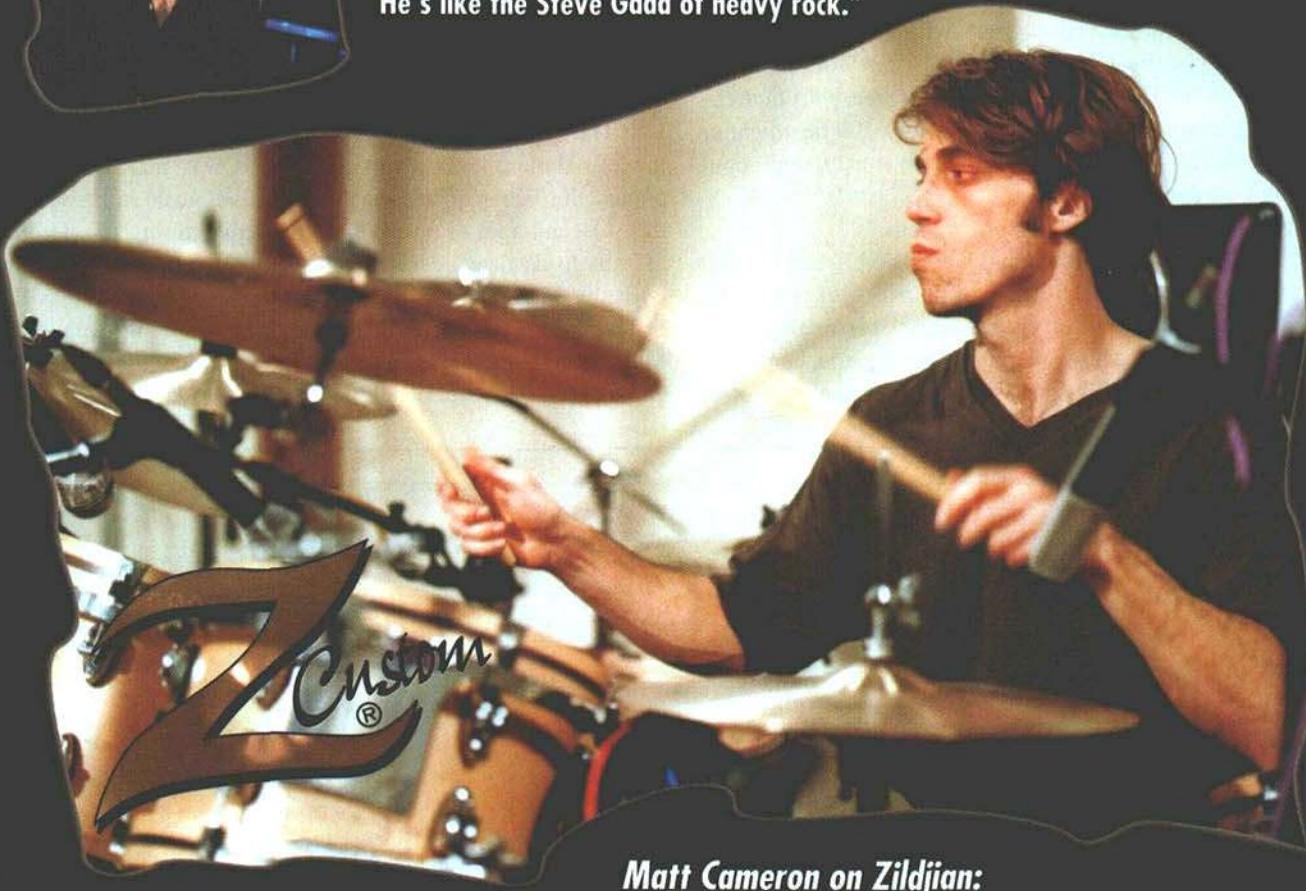
**LC:** No. Being from New York, I went through Borough-Wide and All-City orchestras. And I had friends in my neigh-

"To portray the style of the music and also keep the time there, I had to learn the language of what Savion was doing."

# "Matt comes at you from nowhere with incredible odd-time stuff."

White Zombie's John Tempesta on Matt Cameron

"Matt's one of my favorite players. What I love about him is his capacity to play with such force and feeling, he's such a loose player, with the ability to come at you from nowhere with incredible odd-time stuff. He's like the Steve Gadd of heavy rock."



## Matt's Soundgarden Set-up:

- A. 15" K HiHat Top
- 15" A New Beat HiHat Bottom
- B. 19" Z Custom Medium Crash
- C. 21" A Medium Ride
- D. 18" Z Custom Medium Crash
- E. 19" Z Custom Rock Crash



## Matt Cameron on Zildjian:

"I want cymbals that have dynamics and volume that will be heard over screaming guitars and pounding bass. Z Custom Crashes really project, they have awesome tone, and sustain just enough... they're so clean sounding, so crisp."

"My A Medium Ride is my favorite. It has a very distinct ping, and it washes nicely with my crashes. My Hats are awesome too, a K top and an A New Beat bottom."

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borhood with whom I played in different R&B bands. Steve Jordan and I grew up together. We all played in these bands aping the records we liked. I really liked Tower Of Power. Steve and I caught them at the Bottom Line. Cold Blood was another band I liked. That was the era of the jazz/funk big band.

My parents are from the West Indies, so I heard a lot of calypso while growing up, as well as a lot of jazz. And I bought a lot of singles to figure out the drumming. I also studied at a school called Jazz Interactions in 1974. That's where I met Freddie Waits, who taught our class. A lot of great drummers were in that class, including Omar Hakim and Doane Perry, who plays with Jethro Tull. After that I went to Queens College, where I played in the jazz band.

**KM:** What did you learn from Freddie Waits?

**LC:** Freddie's known mainly as a jazz drummer with Ramsey Lewis, but he had a big R&B background. He played on some of the Motown records. He talked to us about the Motown revue coming to the Apollo Theatre when he was the house drummer—how he had to get pumped up for each performer. But he *taught* us about playing sensitively and interpreting the music, and about getting around the drums.

**KM:** After you left school, your first pro gig was....

**LC:** Larry Young & Fuel, as the band was called. I had *no* idea what it was going to be about. It was a combination of funk, jazz, and Latin—very powerful and very loud. Larry's personality made him easy to get along with. It was a tremendous experience for me. I had chops from playing in bands, but I had to listen to a lot of

records to understand where Larry was going at the time.

After I left Larry I worked with Herbie Mann for five years, beginning in 1977. Herbie was a really great musician and a nice guy. We played Brazilian-Latin-jazz music, and it was a great band. The combination of music we played was amazing. Herbie was into developing his Brazilian funk then. Nana Vasconcelos played with us, as well as a lot of other great percussionists, like Sammy Figueroa.

We did an album called *Sunbelt* on Atlantic. On one track I recorded simultaneously with Steve Gadd and Steve Jordan. I played a Brazilian tom-tom part. Herbie liked working with two drummers at the same time. He did a couple tunes with me and Steve, and then some with the two Steves together. That was the first time I met Gadd, which was an interesting moment. Herbie opened me up to a lot of different musicians, helped me learn to play Brazilian music—which helped me on later projects as well.

**KM:** Why was there so much music in New York City in the '70s?

**LC:** The '70s scene was analogous to earlier eras in Manhattan. In the '30s Harlem was popular; in the '50s, 50th and Broadway was popular for bebop. There was a lot of live music in New York in the '70s, and a lot of record dates for actual drums, too. I got a lot of calls to do dates, even though I wasn't well known. I worked with the Movement, which was a band on Don King's label, believe it or not. As part of the record promotion, we got to see Muhammad Ali fight Jimmy Young in Washington. That was an experience. Lofts were cheaper in the '70s and you could play in

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your apartment. Guys would come by and play. On 24th Street, where I lived, Hiram Bullock and Clifford Carter lived next door. Mark Egan lived across the street, and Nat Adderley Junior lived down the block. Everybody was jamming and forming bands. I remember a lot of gigs at Mikell's, Seventh Avenue South, The Cellar, and the Peppermint Lounge. Then I played in Michael Franks' band for a while. A very enjoyable gig.

**KM:** Did playing with Larry Young's band give you the jazz chops necessary for Michael Franks' gig, which does have swing elements?

**LC:** It was that and playing jazz in the Queens College big band. From there I just tried to hone in on specific styles of music.

After I did Michael Franks for a year, as well as lots of pickup gigs in Manhattan, I noticed that the Linn drum machine was coming in and taking work from drummers. This was 1980 or '81. Luckily, through a friend, I got involved in a theater piece called *The Gospel At Colonus*, which was a tremendous success. The performers in that show were legendary gospel singers. It was almost like doing a concert every night. I was amazed at their ability to portray feeling. The show was about R&B and church-oriented rhythms. The two-beat feel was prominent. I learned how to pick up nuances of church music. They tend to rush in gospel churches, so my goal was to get the feel but maintain the tempo. The other thing was to interpret the two-beat well enough to make the singers comfortable.

**KM:** The two-beat is universally thought of as rather corny.

**LC:** It's not, though; there is a certain swing that happens, which I

had to learn. It would go through permutations, like taking the ride from the hi-hat to the tom, almost like a Latin tom part. I would put a mambo on the tom against the two-beat, which would create tension. I'd move from the hi-hat to the tom, then take it out on the bell. That would work the dynamics gradually. I had the ability to stretch out and push it a bit. I never knew you could do that in a church. I could really express myself, as opposed to it being something sacred and delicate. That made it an authentic experience.

**KM:** How did you hook up with Donald Fagen?

**LC:** Around the time I was doing *Gospel*, I played a demo session for a guy named Starz Vanderlocken, who had played percussion on Donald Fagen's *The Nightfly*. Two days later, he tells me he played the tape for Fagen! Coincidentally, Fagen's engineer had seen *Gospel At Colonus* and wanted to bring Fagen down to the show. He came the next night and fell in love with it. So I met him and he heard me play. The next thing I know they start recording the music for the show.

I got more work through Fagen's producer, Gary Katz. Working with Fagen and Gary helped strengthen my time. A lot of the music was sequenced. I worked with a cowbell or a tambourine as a click, and I learned how to play a snare and hi-hat to a sequenced bass drum. It was a side of recording I had never experienced before. I had done more live recording. Working with a metronome helped me to fit a part against something that is sequenced. The trick is to not feel stiff, but still have as perfect time as you can. I saw it in my mind as one of the ways to get into pop recordings.

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RAUL REKOW

(Santana)

JAMIE OLDAKER

(Eric Clapton, The Tractors)

PHIL COLLINS



SABIAN

**KM:** What were the challenges recording *Kamakiriad* with Fagen?

**LC:** He's very demanding. I did a lot of different things for him. I played percussion—shekere stuff. I also overdubbed a ghost beat to a snare drum. That was tricky. Usually a ghost beat is played off the initial attack. It gives the appearance of a secondary beat.

**KM:** Why not play the ghost beat when recording the main groove pattern?

**LC:** Donald wanted it that way. You asked me what the challenge was, and I'm giving it to you. [laughs] He's got tremendous ears. I'd do a track and he would like it, but he'd say, "On the third bar you pushed the kick drum too hard." He wasn't breaking my chops; he's just one of those guys who hears things in a certain way. I would usually punch it in, and he would decide if he liked it. That enabled me to improve my time.

Going through an experience like that is like basic training—if you can get through it. I enjoyed the challenge, and it was a tremendous opportunity. Many guys would've died to do that record. It's helped me in many ways. From there I met Walter Becker, and I did some projects for him. One was called *Fralaleelippo*. Jeff Porcaro was on some of that record too. I also recorded some Steely Dan material that has never been released. I played some New Orleans grooves there. Fagen is really into shuffles—not your standard feel, but more edgy and on top.

**KM:** The B-52's was another different experience for you.

**LC:** I have to be honest, I wasn't a big B-52's fan. But we rehearsed a few days at Nile Rodgers' studio in February of '89,

and it was great. I had a lot of fun doing it, and the record was a big smash.

I also recorded with Lenny Pickett & the Borneo Horns. Live, that band would play with three saxophones and drums, but the drums were only hi-hat, kick, and snare. Lenny likes a lot of syncopation within 16th-note phrasing. We recorded the album with drumsticks, but as I worked with the band I realized that *Blasticks* would be the way to go. Then I could hit the horn kicks and not overpower them.

**KM:** Getting back to your current gig, what was the biggest challenge you faced preparing for *Bring In 'Da Noise*?

**LC:** The challenge with developing what I do in *Bring In 'Da Noise* was to be able to work in the confines of the time scenario from piece to piece, and learning to not get thrown by what was going on above me. There was a lot of reliance on me, based on what I was hearing through the monitor and what was on the stage. I felt sometimes like it was impossible to do. But after a few weeks it felt more comfortable. The music isn't complicated; what is hard is making all the stick changes, and catching cues from the monitor and from the director.

**KM:** How does being below the stage affect your dynamic level?

**LC:** I'm miked and in plexiglass baffles. The dynamics happen based on the music. I play the opening number full-out, and then change throughout the show.

**KM:** The drums are very resonant and fit the period of the music. What's your setup and tuning for the show?

**LC:** I use a four-piece Pearl Masters set, with Paiste cymbals. I

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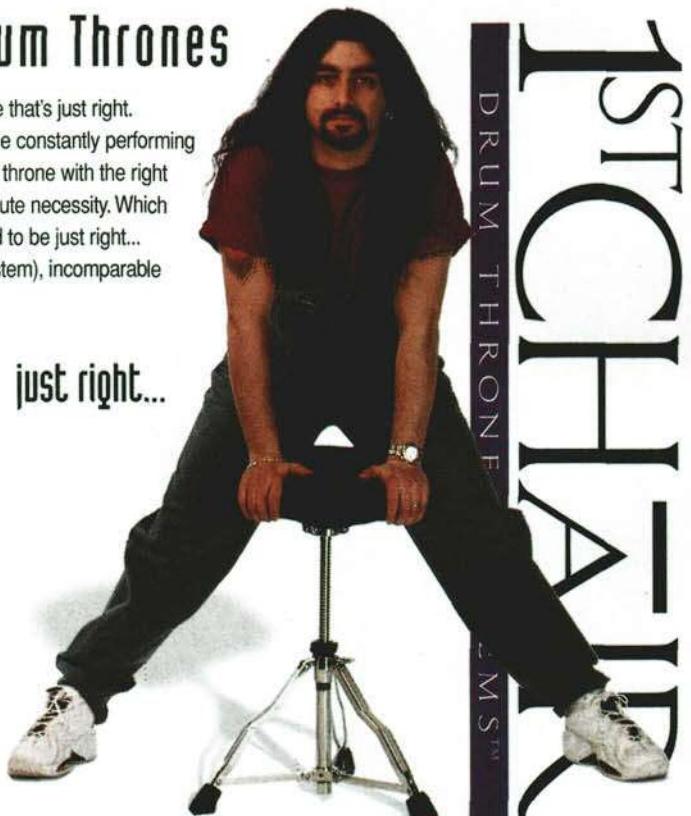
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tune the snare drum open, with the pitch up high. A lot of the sound relates to how I approach the snare drum. I use *Blasticks* and a wire stick brush, which mutes the sound of the drum. I change dynamics, which makes the drum sound chameleonlike. My tuning is between R&B and jazz; it needs a certain kick and depth.

**KM:** What's your sampling pad?

**LC:** It's a *drumKAT*. I have a bass drum sound, a sampled snare drum, congas, an anvil sound, and an orchestral cymbal crash. I also play ankle bells for "Slave Ships."

**KM:** Playing *Bring In 'Da Noise* must be a powerful nightly experience.

**LC:** The show feels to me like a full-out funk or ragtime gig. It's not watered down in terms of the playing, like some shows are. This is a unique experience, 'cause I can play the music in the appropriate style and at the appropriate volume level. It's very rich.

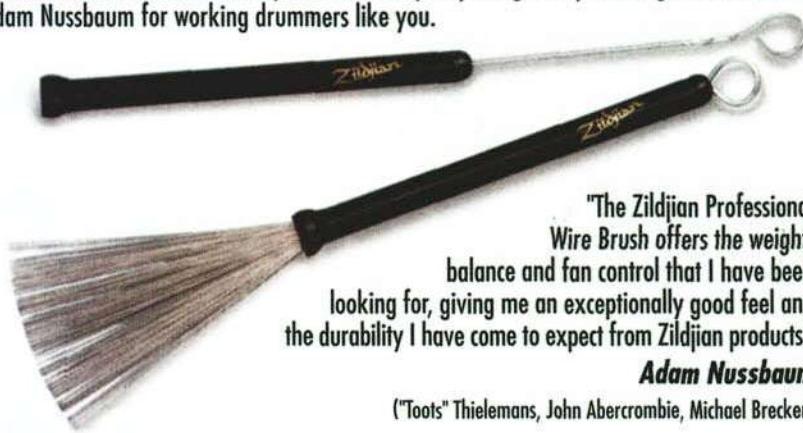
I also feel some of the energy that people are walking away with. They've not only been entertained, but educated. They've learned something, or they're coming to grips with something in themselves. It's not simply entertainment. This show makes you think, and it might possibly change your misconceptions.



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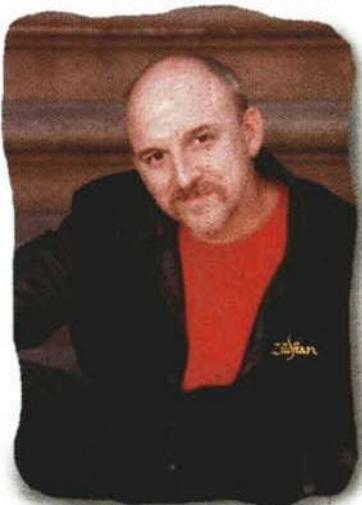


"The Zildjian Professional Wire Brush offers the weight, balance and fan control that I have been looking for, giving me an exceptionally good feel and the durability I have come to expect from Zildjian products."

**Adam Nussbaum**

("Toots" Thielemans, John Abercrombie, Michael Brecker)

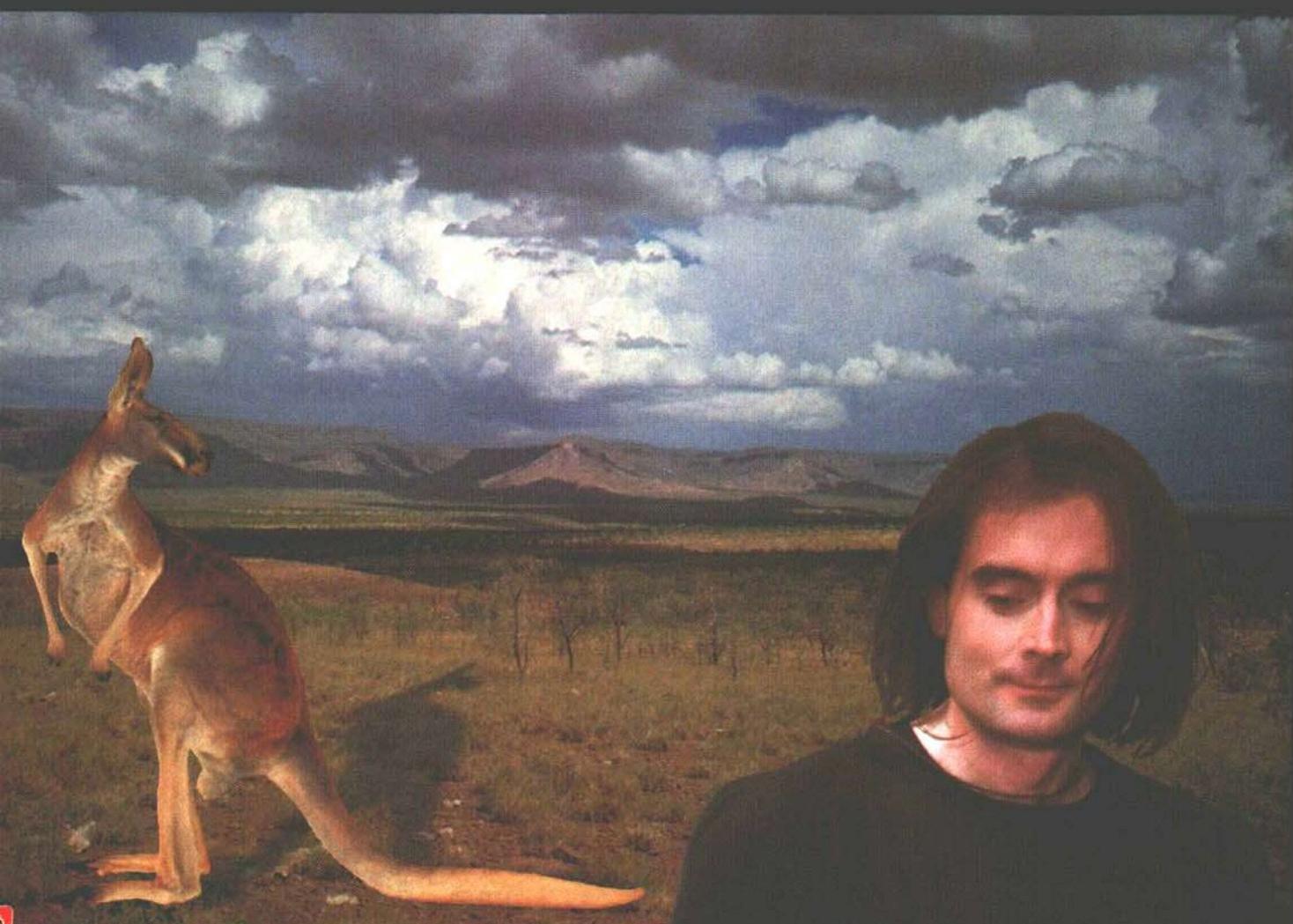
**Adam Nussbaum**



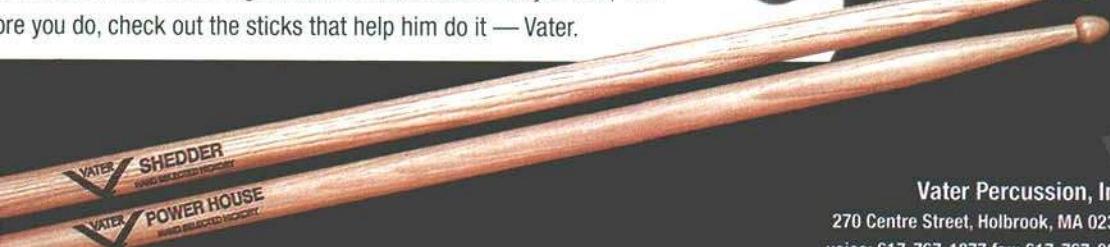
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# Ever wonder where Virgil Donati learned how to kick?



Every once in a while someone comes along that is so naturally talented and unbelievably proficient that they seem to defy the laws of physics. That someone is Virgil Donati. Comments from even the most serious and experienced players on the scene range from "I'm burning my drum set" to "I can't wait to get home and practice that 'cool foot thing'." Virgil's sticks of choice are two new models from Vater: the Powerhouse and the Shedder. In Virgil's own words, "They're straight, balanced, reliable; they speak — LOUD!" That's high praise from the man who could use anything he wanted (including his bare hands) to pull extraordinary music out of his drum kit. Watch Virgil rock the house as soon as you can, but before you do, check out the sticks that help him do it — Vater.



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## Jonathan Mover

**Q** I just heard your band Einstein's CD for the first time, and I am completely knocked out—not only by your drumming (which I think is the perfect cross between the styles of John Bonham and Neil Peart), but by your compositions, too. My first question is about the many odd-time grooves on the record. Although I'm enjoying playing to most of them, I'm not really sure what time I'm playing in,

and how to count it. Could you tell me the breakdown of time signatures for "Tear My Heart Out," "Between The Cracks," "Sleep Under Stone," and "Into The Void"? And could you please transcribe the middle section of "Mirror Mirror," starting with the drum fill that speeds up and slows down?

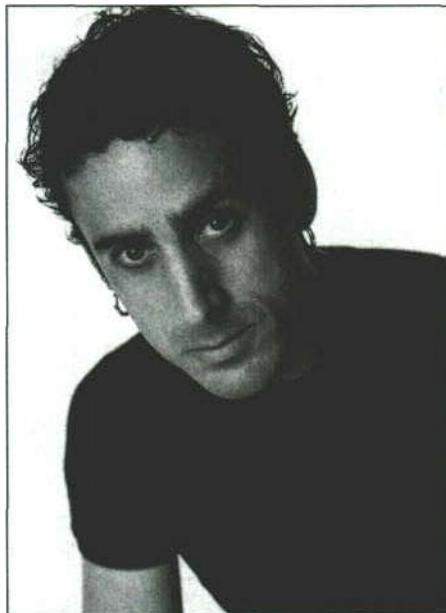
Also, how did you get your incredible drum sound? Was it the equipment you used or the mic' technique? And how can I get the same sound?

Mark Winslough  
New York, NY

**A** Thank you very much for your letter. I'm glad you're enjoying Einstein. And regarding your Bonham/Peart remark, to say that I'm flattered would be a severe understatement.

When it comes to the time signatures you asked about, with the exception of the odd fill or extra bar, the basic outline for each song is as follows: On "Tear My Heart Out" the verse is in 11/8. The chorus is primarily in 6/8 with turnarounds in 3/8, 6/8, 9/8, and 12/8 (along with a 4:3 left-hand hi-hat pattern). The solo section is in 12/8. On "Between The Cracks" the verse is in 15/4, the bridge is in 6/4, the chorus is in 27/8, and the solo section is in 7/4. On "Sleep Under The Stone" the verse, chorus, and solo sections are all in 7/4—although they sound very different—while the bridges are in 11/16. On "Into The Void" the verse is in 6/4, the bridge is in 5/4, the chorus is in 13/4, and the solo section is in 4/4. (How did *that* get in there?)

To make it easier to understand and play in odd time, try taking a full measure and subdividing it into smaller rhythmic sections and/or phrases. For example, 7 can be subdivided and counted as 4 + 3; 15 can be counted as 8 + 7, and so on. For the verse of "Tear," instead of counting from 1 to 11, try counting it as 4 + 4 + 3—that is, as: 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3. For the chorus of "Cracks,"



you might try counting it as 7 + 7 + 7 + 6 instead of from 1 to 27.

Regarding how I got my drum sound, my recipe is as follows: Start with one Tama Starclassic kit with Evans heads, leaving the bottom heads off the toms and making sure to tape up the open lugs to avoid any buzzing. Place the tom mic's underneath and about 1/3 of the way up inside each shell. Mike the snare from the top and the bottom, mike the kick from the inside and the outside, and place the overheads at a distance for "room" sound. Record as normal, and mix with one Bob St. John.

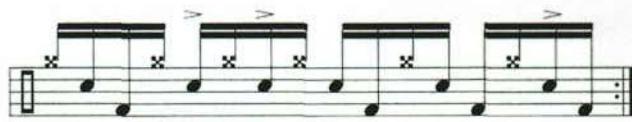
Finally, the drum fill and middle section of "Mirror Mirror" is as follows:



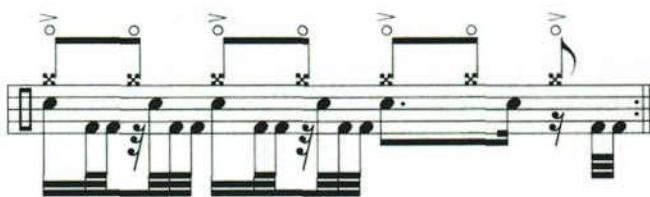
Intro fill:



A section:



B section:



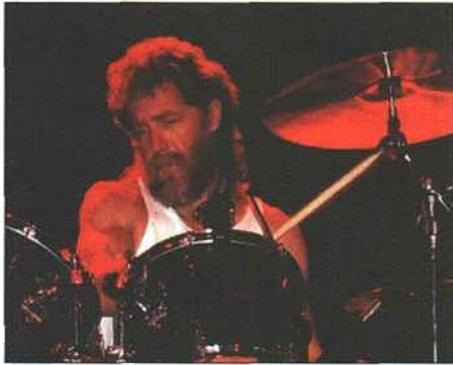
Outro fill:



# Doug "Cosmo" Clifford

I'd like to know what specific brand, model, and sizes of ride, crash, and hi-hat cymbals you used on all of those really superb Creedence Clearwater Revival live and studio recordings. In photos I've seen of you performing live with the band, the cymbals appeared to be either Zildjians or Paistes, but on some studio recordings they sound like all Zildjians. And by the way, what have you been up to lately?

Lawrence Green  
Bedford, OH



Well, Lawrence, I can't be too accurate about the first two albums; it's been a long time and memories do lapse. I know I used Zildjian cymbals, including a 22" ride (probably a medium), at least one 18" medium crash, and 14" hi-hats. But I don't remember the models.

The five other studio and two live LPs are easy. I used Paiste Formula 602 cymbals: a 22" medium ride, two 18" medium crashes, and 14" hi-hats.

For the past year and a half I've been playing in a group with original CCR bassist Stu Cook, lead guitarist Elliott Easton (from the Cars), rhythm guitarist and lead vocalist John Tristao, and utility man Steve Gunner. We were going under the name of Creedence Clearwater Revisited, but because of a temporary restraining order brought by John Fogerty, we have changed our name to Cosmo's Factory. Thanks for asking.



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## Jazz Materials

**Q**I'm a fourteen-year-old drummer who has been playing drums for about two years. It was only recently that I bought my own drumset and really sat down and studied. At the moment my interests lay mainly in playing hard rock, but I would really like to learn about and play jazz. What instructional videos, tapes, and books would you recommend for someone in my position?

Dan Taylor  
via Internet

**A**Learning about jazz and learning to play jazz are really two different things—though they are inseparably related. It's important to understand the nature of jazz by learning about its history, including the people who created it and/or made changes in its direction. Obviously a trip to your local library would be a good idea, since volumes have been written about jazz artists individually and about jazz history in total. However, two smaller works that might give you some introductory background include *Down Beat: 60 Years Of*

*Jazz* (a decade-by-decade history of jazz, blues, and other popular music from the 1930s to today, by jazz scholar John McDonough with the editors of *Down Beat* magazine) and *The Great Jazz Drummers* (a collection of brief biographies of key figures in jazz drumming, by *MD* editor/publisher Ron Spagnardi). Both are available in retail music stores and some bookstores, or from Hal Leonard Corporation, 7777 W. Bluemound Rd., Milwaukee, WI 53213, tel: (414) 774-3630, fax: (414) 774-3259, e-mail: halinfo@halleonard.com.

You can see and hear some of the great jazz drummers of history on DCI Music Video's *Legends Of Jazz Drumming*, a two-volume set with commentary by Roy Haynes. DCI also offers *Buddy Rich, Jazz Legend, Vols. I & II*, *Elvin Jones: Different Drummer*, *Max Roach In Concert & In Session*, and *Gene Krupa: Jazz Legend*, which focus on these very different jazz giants.

Viewing historical and/or performance videos of great jazz artists could provide you with insight and inspiration, even

though they don't particularly focus on the drumming. Beyond what might be available in your local video rental store, WarnerVision videos offers *Memories Of Duke* (Duke Ellington), *Vintage Getz, Vols. 1 & 2* (Stan Getz), *Rhythmstick* (Dizzy Gillespie), the *Jazz Masters Vintage Collection, Vols. 1 & 2* (Count Basie, Billie Holiday, Thelonious Monk, Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Ahmad Jamal, and others), and *Sarah Vaughan & Friends*.

In terms of beginning books, we recommend the *Easy Read Jazz* book/cassette package from Percussion Express (P.O. Box 1731, Rockford, IL 61110, tel: [815] 229-3131). It's designed for the beginning jazz player who is very likely a non-reader. The book begins with the basic jazz rhythms and explores how they are used. Explanations are given on brushes, solos, Latin jazz, and various time signatures. Then the material proceeds into how to read charts and play along with a band.

Once you get a little further into your jazz studies you might check out John Riley's *The Art Of Bop Drumming* (book/CD package), which covers time

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playing, comping, soloing, brushes, and charts, and *Art Blakey: Jazz Messages*, a book/audio package by John Ramsay that provides analysis, transcriptions, and examples of the style and wisdom of the great Art Blakey. Both are offered by Manhattan Music Publications.

Unfortunately, there aren't many instructional videos that deal exclusively in the jazz idiom. However, one excellent choice is Peter Erskine's *Everything Is Timekeeping*, in which Peter discusses and demonstrates jazz ride patterns, ride-cymbal technique, basic jazz independence and coordination, improvisation and composition, and other subjects. You should also check out Ed Thigpen's *The Essence Of Brushes*, and Clayton Cameron's *The Living Art Of Brushes*, for excellent instruction on this important element of jazz drumming. All are available from DCI Music Video.

DCI Music Video, WarnerVision Videos, and Manhattan Music Publications are all divisions of Warner Bros. Publications, and are distributed through music and book stores. You may contact Warner Bros, at 15800 N.W. 48th Ave., Miami, FL 33014.

## Cleaning A Black Beauty

**Q** I own a Ludwig *Black Beauty Limited Edition* snare drum that looks and sounds great. The etching and finish on the drum are beautiful. I'd like to keep it looking as good as it does now. What is the best way to clean and preserve the finish on the shell?

Anthony Buccetti  
via Internet

**A** The best care for any drum is always preventive care: Keep it in a case or bag when not in use, wipe it off with a clean, soft cloth before you put it away, and handle it with care to avoid scratching it. When it comes to actually cleaning a drumshell, you can use a product specifically made for the purpose (such as Trick Drum, Cymbal, & Hardware Cleaner) or a light-duty household dusting spray (like Pledge or Endust). You don't want to use any harsh cleaners that might leave a film behind. Additionally, be sure to spray your cleaner onto your cloth, rather than onto the drum. Cleaners can get built up in the corners and crevices of drum hardware (and in the etching on a *Black Beauty*), so you want to use them very sparingly. Even

then, it may be necessary to use a cotton swab (like a *Q-tip*) or perhaps a bit of cloth and a toothpick to make sure you get all of the cleaner out of the tight spaces.

## Sound Control

**Q** My drums are in my basement. The floor is a concrete slab covered by a thin industrial carpet. The walls are wood paneling. A drop ceiling covers the floor joists for the living-room floor above, which is hardwood over a sub-floor.

I recently bought *SoundOff* muffling pads for my kit. If you stand next to the kit as I play, it's amazing how low the volume is. However, upstairs in the living room, the sound is literally three to four times what you hear in the basement! How can I reduce the sound (using the *SoundOff* pads and whatever other method necessary) enough that my wife has no problem watching TV above?

SVari69255  
via Internet

**A** The problem is probably a case of vibrations being transferred physically through the structure of your house, as



*Dave Weckl*

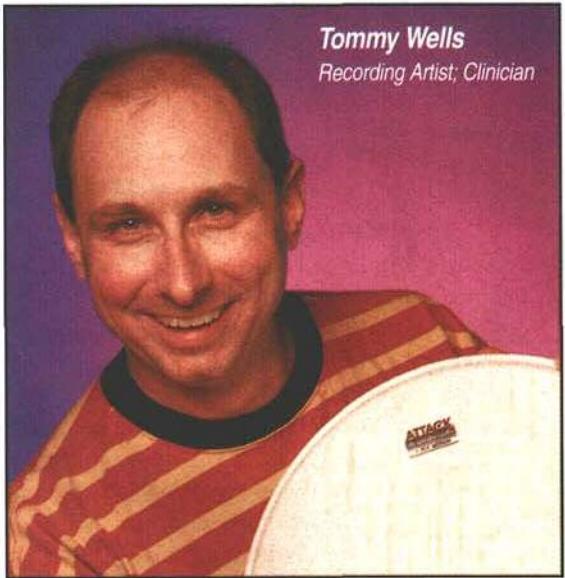
Dave Weckl  
Ambassador Coated/Ambassador Snare  
Emperor Coated/Ebony  
Ambassador Coated/Ambassador Clear

*Sheila E.*

Sheila E.  
Ambassador Coated/Ambassador Snare  
Pinstripe/Ambassador Smooth White  
Pinstripe/Ambassador Clear

*Simon Phillips*

Simon Phillips  
CS Coated w/Black Dot/Ambassador Snare  
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Emperor Clear/Ambassador Clear



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opposed to sound being transmitted through the air. Try adding a couple more layers of carpeting or other padding under the drums, to act as a buffer between the drums and the concrete floor. Failing that, try erecting a tent-like structure (or even a solid "false ceiling") over the kit to contain and reflect sound vibrations back down rather than up into the ceiling/floor structure above you.

## Drum Re-covering Material

**Q**I'm looking to re-cover my kit. Could you provide a list of sources for drum covering material?

Dan Smith  
Moscow, ID

**A**Here are four companies that offer a wide selection of styles and colors in drum re-covering material:

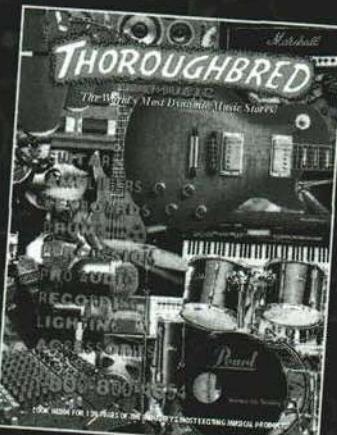
A.F. Blaemire, 5208 Monte Bonito Dr., Los Angeles, CA 90041, (213) 256-0025  
HQ Percussion Products, P.O. Box 430065, St. Louis, MO 63143, (314) 647-9009  
Precision Drum Company, 151 California Rd., Yorktown Heights, NY 10598, (914) 962-4985

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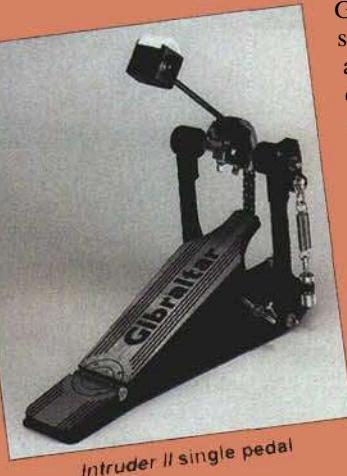
drum hardware (lugs, spurs, holders, legs, snare strainer, etc.), which is said to provide a stress-free, exceptionally reflective shell with no drilling or attachments and no interior hardware (bolt heads or screws).

Drums are finished in high-gloss lacquers, and are available in all sizes, with the buyer's choice of heads and either chrome or black nylon-coated hardware. A five-drum shell pack would be priced at approximately \$2,000 US, depending on drum sizes.



## What's In A Name?

### Gibraltar Intruder II and Avenger II Pedals and Lightning Hi-Hat



Intruder II single pedal

Gibraltar's *Intruder II* and *Avenger II* pedals are renamed from the original versions due to significant upgrades to both. Those upgrades include a new frame assembly that utilizes four bearings per drive system, a new pedal board with a cast hinge, a quick-release rock plate for easy tear down and transport, independently adjustable beater angle and spring tension, and a new dual-surface self-adjusting beater. The *Avenger U* single pedal lists at \$159.50; the heavier-duty *Intruder II* is priced at \$189.50. Double-pedal versions of both pedals are also available.

Also new from Gibraltar is the *Lightning* hi-hat. It features the *Lightning Drive System*, which allows the player to feel equal tension with both the down and the up stroke of each pedal movement. The system employs a hardened-steel U-joint with two double-chain-drive assemblies. This is connected to a fully enclosed adjustable single spring. The *Lightning* is the flagship of Gibraltar's hi-hat line, all models of which have undergone upgrades.



## Want To Brush Up Your Technique?

### Zildjian Brushes

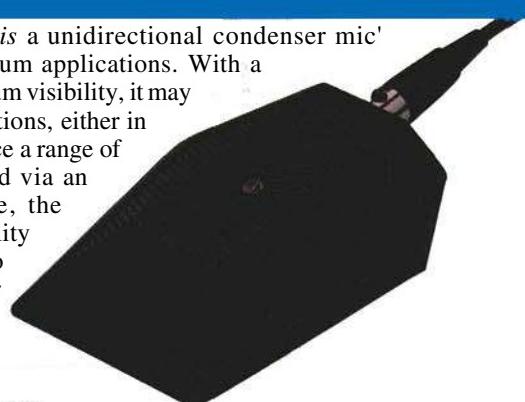
Zildjian's new, retractable *Professional Wire Brushes* feature comfortable, sure-grip rubber handles and a two-position "fan spread" setting feature for greater versatility. The brush was designed in conjunction with jazz artist Adam Nussbaum.



## Hey Where's That Sound Coming From?

### Audio-Technica ATM87R Kick Drum Mic'

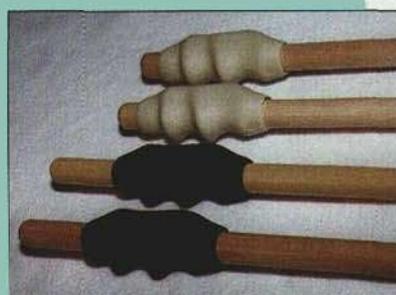
Audio-Technica's *ATM87R* is a unidirectional condenser mic' designed to excel in kick-drum applications. With a plow-profile design for minimum visibility, it may be placed in a variety of locations, either in or near a kick drum, to produce a range of desirable timbres. Powered via an external 9-52V DC source, the mic's ultra-high SPL capability and flat response are said to make it equally applicable for both studio and stage use.



## Sticking A Little Shaky? GetAGrip!

### Ambidex Drumstick Grips

*Ambidex* drumstick grips, from Percussion Ergonomic Developers (P.E.D.), are contoured rubber grips that can be slipped over the ends of drumsticks



11/16" in diameter and smaller) and secured in the desired position. The devices are designed to provide a more secure grip, as well as to re-balance the stick for optimum response and playability. This is claimed to offer increased comfort, control, power, confidence, and dynamics, while reducing hand fatigue and calluses (to say nothing of dropped sticks). The grips are removable and reusable, and come in black or off-white. They are available direct from the manufacturer for \$12 per pair, plus \$4.50 shipping.

# More New Products Than You Can Shake...Er, Tap...Er, Hit...Er... LP, CP, and World Beat Products

LP Music Group has been a beehive of activity lately, and the result is a veritable swarm of new percussion products. In the LP line, new items include

improved wooden talking

drums (1), now with a tuning system that eliminates the steel rim present on older models,

the *Sing Jing* (2), finger cymbals mounted on a curved steel handle for effortless one-handed playing, *Monk Bells* (3), traditional Far-Eastern wooden hand-held bells, and a new "spider white" finish on LP's fiber-glass bongos (4).

In the medium-priced CP line, new products include the *Supreme Ashiko Drums* (5), conga-like drums made of Siam oak, with straight tapered sides, available in three sizes

and two colors, *Supreme Djembes* (6), also made of Siam oak, available in two sizes and two colors, and the *CP-EZ Grip* cowbell (7), which features a wooden handle attached to the rear of the bell. The ashikos and djembes are said to be "great for drum circles."



In their low-priced World Beat line, LP now offers *Chickitas* (8), wooden mini-maracas with egg-shaped heads filled with non-toxic steel shot that produces a delicate sound, the *Monkey Drum* (9), a small, traditional Asian drum mounted on the end of a handle and fitted with

suspended beads that strike the drum when the handle is rotated, and tacked-head bongos (10), available in three size combinations.

In their accessory line, LP has also introduced a molded-plastic *Road Ready* conga case, an improved version of their well-known *Claw* percussion, cymbal, and mic' holder, and a new marching



ing-percussion "rack" designed to enable marching bands and drum corps to move their percussionists from the pit to the field.



## Making Contact

**Audio-Technica**  
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fax: (330) 688-3752

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Software/Q Up Arts  
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fax: (408) 689-0102

**LP Music Group**  
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fax: (201) 772-3568

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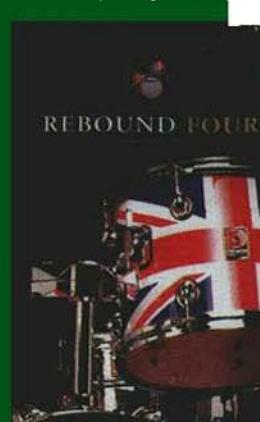
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**Premier Percussion** has released its fourth Rebound full-color catalog. The publication contains descriptions of all Premier products, as well as information on Premier artists.

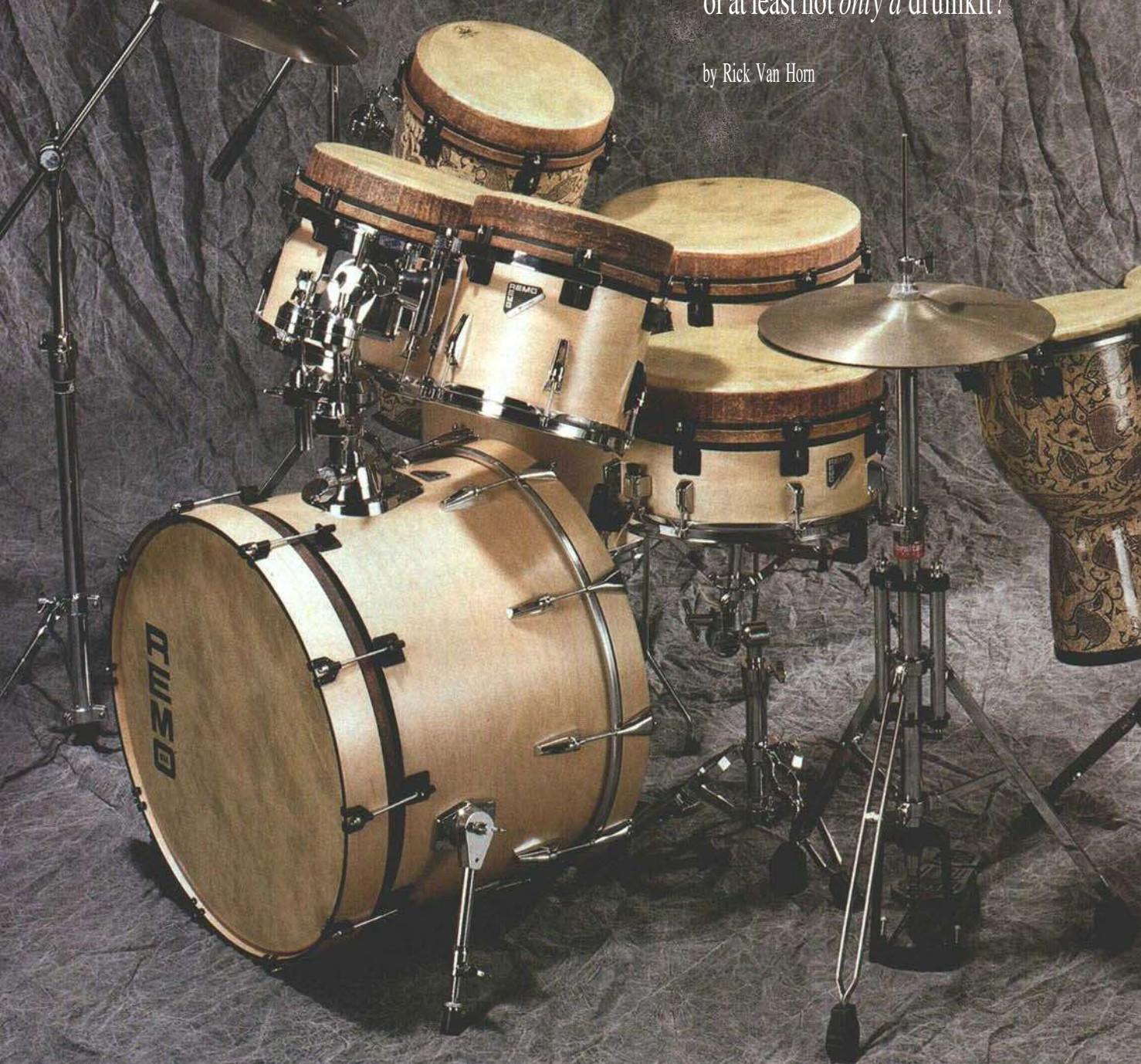
Also new is **Sabian's** *Newsbeat*, a newspaper-style publication that includes stories on the company, its artists, and its cymbal-making techniques, along with a complete fold-out cymbal selection catalog.



# Remo Mondo Drumkit

When is a drumkit not a drumkit,  
or at least not *only* a drumkit?

by Rick Van Horn





Before I say anything else, let me state clearly and unequivocally: REMO'S *MONDO DRUMKIT IS NOT FOR EVERYONE!* A cursory glance at the photos in this review should tell you why. But it's important that a certain context be established from the outset here—all the more so because of the very favorable things I'll say later about the kit.

Intrigued yet? You should be, because while the *Mondo* kit has its limitations, it also offers qualities that some drummers (myself included) have been looking for for a long time. Remo describes the kit as having been designed "to bridge the gap between the conventional drumset and the growing world percussion movement." So far, so good. They also say that the drums offer "a uniquely warm, earthy sound when played with sticks, brushes, mallets, fingers, or hands." That also sounds very appealing. And the drums certainly *look* unique.

The *Mondo* kit we tested consisted of 10x10 and 10x12 mounted toms (on RIMS mounts), 14x14 and 16x16 floor toms, a 16x22 bass drum, 7½x12 and 7½x14 snare drums, and 8", 10", and 12" *Tombeks* (Remo's original combination doumbek/tom-toms). (Also available are 12x14 and 14x16 floor toms and 16x18 and 16x20 bass drums.) The shells are all created of Remo's *Acousticon* material, with specially adapted molded bearing edges—with recesses set well down along the top edge of the shells to accommodate thick *Mondo* drumheads.

The contoured *Mondo* batter heads look very much like tucked calf conga heads, but are, in fact, made of *Mylar* and poly-spun fibers to offer the warmth and tonality of calf but the strength and durability of contemporary plastic heads. All of the drums except the bass drum feature these special *Mondo* heads as batters, with more traditionally styled (but still calf-like) *Fiberskyn 3 FD* (thin) heads on the bottoms. The bass drum is fitted with the *Mondo* head on the front and a *Powerstroke 3 Fiberskyn 3* head on the batter side. More on this later.

So what you have are drums that are hybrids of traditional drumkit models and Afro-Latin hand drums (along with

### WHAT'S HOT

- deep, rich tonality from toms and bass drum
- outstanding sensitivity from snare drums
- versatility for use in drumkit and/or handpercussion applications
- unusual appearance

### WHAT'S NOT

- limited tuning range
- no batter-head change potential (for varying sounds)
- unusual appearance

the even more ethnic *Tombeks*). The result might be considered wonderful or weird, depending on your application (and your point of view).

### Sound

I don't always agree with a manufacturer's description of how their drums sound, but Remo's is right on the money: "warm, dark, earthy." I also agree that the *Acousticon* shell provides a "low-pitched fundamental" and "excellent projection." All of the toms—and most especially the bass drum—produced warm, round, and full tones. And while I wouldn't say any of the drums had tremendous "attack," neither would I say that stick (or even finger) impact sounded "dull" or "dead." The plastic element of the *Mondo* heads still produces plenty of bright response to sticks—even if that response is mellowed somewhat by the fiber layers. What you wind up with is a clean, natural drum sound that has all of the melodiousness of a conga drum with the punch of a drumkit-style drum. To my ear, it's a terrific combination.

The bass drum is absolutely wonderful. At first one might wonder why this drum has the *Mondo* head on the front, rather than on the batter side (like the toms and snares do). I think the reason is two-fold. First, the functional reason: The *Powerstroke 3 Fiberskyn 3* batter head is *intended* to be a bass drum batter. Although it's designed to sound calf-like, it's still designed to withstand the rigors of bass-drum playing. Plus, it can be held by a wooden bass drum hoop of traditional size. The *Mondo* head might prove impractical as a bass drum batter, which is always struck at exactly the same place. Additionally, its raised profile already requires an extra-wide bass drum hoop to attach it to the drum; allowing more hoop width for attaching a pedal would make the whole thing very unwieldy.

But more importantly, the *sound* of the bass drum is greatly influenced by this head arrangement. Lately we've been reviewing a lot of terrific-sounding bass drums, and part of that terrific sound has been the increasing use of front bass drum heads with built-in muffling systems. More and more drums can now be played with nothing inside them, and can sound both big *and* controlled. With the heavy, thick *Mondo* head on its front, the bass drum in our test kit was downright sub-woofer-ish in its bass response, with punch and tonality to spare—and yet still was very controlled. (And yes, Virginia, there was nothing in the drum.) This was my favorite

drum on the whole kit.

"Wait a moment," you say. "All you've talked about is deep, warm, round, thick-sounding drums and heads. That's great for toms, but what about the snare drums?" Well, let's keep the "warm" and the "round," but let's add "incredibly sensitive" and "surprisingly crisp" to the adjective list. In fact, I was really surprised at how much snare sensitivity these babies had, considering their thick heads and the depth of their shells. However, this is an area in which Remo's *Acousticon* shell material really shines. There's something about the density and reflectivity of the material that gives toms depth but accents the high end when you put a set of snares on the drum. (Remo's piccolo snare remains one of the industry's gems for this very reason.) As a result, both of our test drums sounded clean and crisp when played with sticks, with perhaps a bit more natural ring than some "traditional" wood snares would produce. This ring worked to my advantage when I flipped the snares off and played the drums by hand; they fell into a musical area halfway between timbales and bongos. And while I couldn't use a *Zero Ring* to eliminate the ring when

playing the drums with the snares on (since there was no rim to hold one in place), a small piece of tape did the trick. In addition, I was able to play brushes quite nicely on either of our test snares (try that on most 7"-deep snares), taking advantage of the "natural" feel of the *Mondo* head surface along with the sensitivity of

each drum. The snare strainers (and adjustable butts) on each drum are almost comically simple in their appearance and function—but they get the job done, so why complain?

Tying with the snare drums for my second-favorites on the *Mondo* kit were the *Tombeks*. I've not had much experience with doumbeks or any similar drums, so I wasn't prepared for the extensive range of pitches that these drums can produce. Because it has a very pronounced bowl under the perimeter of the head, a *Tombek* can create very high-pitched, bongo-like sounds when played near the edge.



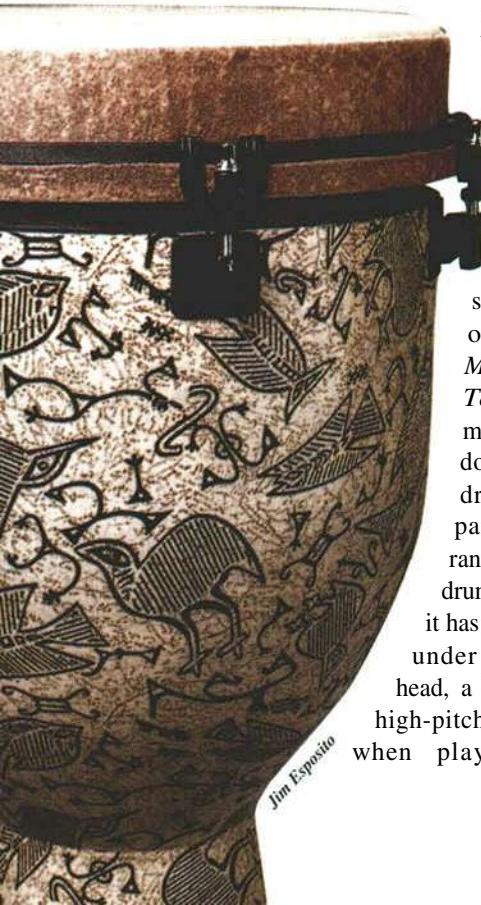
However, the deep, open-bottomed cylinder under the center of the head helps produce extremely low, resounding tones when the drum is struck more toward the center. Hitting the head in between these points gets a little of both sounds, which is interesting and very musical. I especially enjoyed playing these drums as contrasting sounds to the "traditional" toms for musical drumset fills, and as complements to the 12" snare drum when I was playing with my hands.

### Appearance

Look again at the photos. Need I say that these drums don't look like anybody else's? Let me just add that the "kit" drumshells are covered in Remo's *Venwood* wood-veneer finish (in this case a natural maple color; ebony and emerald stains are also available). Our test *Tombeks* feature "Fossil Fantasy" *FabriFinish* coverings, which are just what they sound like: a colorful printed fabric affixed directly to the shell. Even more ethnic "Multi-Mask" and "African Stripes" prints are also available.

### Limitations

Now, even given all the things I liked about how the *Mondo* drumkit sounds, I must reiterate what I said at the beginning of this review: *Mondo* drums cannot realistically be considered general-purpose drums. While they offer very few limitations in playing style (you can hit them as hard as you would any other drums, play them with brushes, and do rimshots, but rim clicks are a little tricky), you *can't* do some of the functional things that you might do with a "traditional" kit. For one thing, tuning capabilities are somewhat limited, and you can't get widely different tonalities by making a quick change in drumhead selection. (These drums are



designed to use the *Mondo* batter heads—period.) This means that if you were playing in a room in which the warmth, depth, and "natural" quality of the drums didn't cut as well as a brighter-sounding kit would do, there really wouldn't be much you could do about it. You might be able to brighten them up by using other *bottom* heads, but I suspect the effect would be minimal.

You might also encounter some sound-reinforcement problems with the bass drum. I would be loathe to cut a hole in the *Mondo* front head, from both an aesthetic and an acoustic point of view. Even though the natural sound of the bass drum with an intact front head is very controlled, some sound engineers are less than open-minded about such things.

### Conclusions And Pricing

"Open-minded" is the operative phrase here. If you are the type of drummer who is open-minded about sound potential, musical application, and the possibilities afforded by something completely out of the ordinary, then a *Mondo* drumkit might be just your cup of tea. And the beauty of it is that Remo offers the drums as kit packages or as individual components, so you can either take the plunge gradually (adding a tom, a secondary snare, or a *Tombek* or two to your existing kit) or jump in altogether. You might choose to use only the more "traditional" drumkit-style drums, or focus on the more "ethnic" aspects (as in the multi-*Tombek* kit shown here).

If you already incorporate world music into your repertoire, here's a great way to "bridge the gap" (as Remo puts it) between conventional drumkit playing and hand percussion. But even if you only see (and hear) yourself playing more traditional drumkit styles, you owe it to yourself to investigate what *Mondo* drums sound like—because it's a sound unlike any other you're likely to find. One could reasonably argue that the kits will be somewhat one-dimensional, owing to the tuning limitations mentioned earlier. But since most drummers tend to stick with a sound and tuning that they like even with a kit that *can* be more flexible, I'd venture to say that drummers who like the sound of the *Mondo* kit will not be particularly bothered by this limitation. And while some people will undoubtedly think that they look "weird," others will dig them for that very reason. So the only question is: Whether or not they're for everybody, are *Mondo* drums for you?

To help you in your consideration, here's the pricing structure for *Mondo* drums: Our nine-piece test kit (not including the 12" snare drum) has a list price of \$4,150. (It was supplied only with legs, mounts, and stands necessary to mount the toms and *Tombeks*; no additional stands were included.) A five-piece kit (10" and 12" toms, 14x14 floor, 16x20 bass drum, and 14" snare) would go for \$2,650. The 12" snare on its own is priced at \$395. Individual *Tombeks* (fitted with side mounts for use on a stand) are priced as follows: 8"—\$195; 10"—\$225; 12"—\$265.

# Noble & Cooley SP Snare Drums

by Rick Mattingly

**N&C takes a giant step...backward...in design, and comes up with a winner.**

Noble & Cooley has replaced its *Horizontal Ply* line of snare drums (*HP* and *Horizons* models) with the *SP* series. According to the manufacturer, the goal was to make a more "traditional"-sounding snare drum with more overtones, a wider tuning range, a "looser" feel, and a fatter sound.

The *SP* snare drums are available in four sizes: 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ x12, 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ x13, 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ x14, and 7x14. The first three have eight tube lugs each, while the 7x14 has ten. Lugs are attached to the shell by a single bolt at the lower nodal point. Shells are 7-ply maple and are available in ten finishes. Each drum has a single air vent, cleverly hidden underneath the standard Noble & Cooley snare-release lever.

One "traditional" element of these drums is that the hoops are flanged and are lighter in weight than the die-cast hoops typically found on Noble & Cooley drums. Tension screws are isolated from the rims by nylon washers. Hardware is available with either chrome or black powder-coat finishes. The 12" and 13" drums that

### WHAT'S HOT

- 12" and 13" diameter drums have wider pitch range than their size would indicate
- 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ x14 drum is extremely versatile, with lots of low end

we received for review each had generic 20-strand Taiwanese spiral snare units. The two 14" drums had Noble & Cooley *Cam-Action* snares that are designed to lay flatter against the batter head.

The 12" drum was fitted with an Evans *UNO 58 1000* white-coated batter head and an Evans *Genera 200* snare head. The other three drums all had *Genera G1 Coated* batter heads. The 13" drum had an Evans *Resonant* snare head while the two 14" drums each had Evans *Snare Side 200 Hazy* snare heads.

On to the sound. Past Noble & Cooley drums always had a certain "precision" in terms of tone and response. Depending on your point of view, they either sounded "clean" or "sterile." The *SP* snare drums have a distinctly different personality.

That was quickly evident with the 12" drum. When I first played it, it had been cranked up pretty tight and produced the crisp, high-pitched "pop" that one typically associates with such drums. Because of its dimensions, it had some of that "coffee-can"

ring to it that sounds like a cross between a snare drum and a timbale. (That sound always makes me want to play reggae rhythms with a lot of rimshots. The drum sounded fine when I did so.)

My previous experience with such drums is that however good they sound when tightly tensioned, that's usually the *only* way they sound good. If you try to get more body by taking the heads down a bit and loosening the snares, you end up with a flabby sound and a horrible conflict between pitch and ring. But when I lowered the pitch of both heads on this drum and loosened the snares just a bit, I was delighted to actually achieve the desired effect. The overtones increased somewhat so as to give the drum a slightly fatter (but still relatively crisp) sound. And while the drum continued to produce a healthy amount of ring, it wasn't at odds with the pitch. The overall sound was still on the high end of the snare drum spectrum, but it had more character than typical drums of that size.

Much the same can be said of the 13" model. Cranked up really

responded well over a wide tuning range. Obviously it didn't have quite the same sound when cranked up as that of the two smaller-diameter drums, but it did produce a clear, cracking sound that would cut through just about any band in terms of both pitch and power.

But what really distinguished this drum from other Noble & Cooley snare drums I have played was the lower end of its range. I really was able to get a warm, dark sound from the drum—two characteristics that I've seldom associated with N&C. The drum sounded good with crisp snares throughout its range, but also sounded good with loosened snares at the lower end, producing a gutsy, funky sound that would be totally appropriate in the nastiest blues band.

The 7x14 model had similar characteristics at its low end, and for those wanting a big, fat, loud sound for *everything*, this would be the drum of choice. It didn't sound quite as good cranked up tight, and the snare articulation wasn't quite as responsive due to



From left: 5 3/4x14, with maple finish and chrome hardware; 5 3/4x13, with clear finish and black hardware (top); 7x14, with blackwash finish and chrome hardware; and 5 3/4x12, with cherry finish and chrome hardware

tight, it also produced a good "reggae-like" sound. But because of the larger diameter matched to the same depth, the drum had a drier sound than the 12" model, and its sound color reminded me somewhat of a high-tension parade drum.

Again, lowering the pitch of both heads and loosening the snares slightly gave more body to the sound. The 13" diameter still favored a fairly high pitch, so I wouldn't go so far as to say that the drum sounded "dark" or "warm." But it did have more depth of overtones than I would typically expect from a drum that size.

The more drums I test of various sizes, the more convinced I am that the reason 14" drums with depths of between 5" and 6" have been the most popular for decades is that they are truly the most versatile. That was certainly true of the 5 3/4x14 SP snare drum. It

the deeper depth. Still, even in those two areas it outperformed most of the deep snare drums I've played. It may not be quite as versatile as the shallower 14" model, but it still covers a pretty wide range of pitch and color.

Overall, I'd say that Noble & Cooley accomplished its stated goal. Whereas the company's previous snare drums have had a certain "high-tech" modern sound to them, the SP drums have more of a vintage personality.

The 5 3/4x12 and 5 3/4x13 models both list for \$740. The 5 3/4x14 model is priced at \$760, and the 7x14 SP snare drum sells for \$800. Those prices are for drums with chrome hardware; drums with black powder-coated hardware each list for \$30 less.

# New Regal Tip Sticks

by William F. Miller

## Fun new models to play-and no finish changes!

What a nice feel. Yes, there's something about the finish of Regal Tip sticks that makes them *so* easy to grip. It's a certain "tackyness" that almost borders on being gluey. Many players are fond of the feel, that's for sure.

Oddly enough, some drummers say that Regal Tips are slippery, an opinion probably based more on the line's glossy appearance than on real-life experience with them. ("They're so shiny they must be slick.") No matter how you feel about them, Regal Tip sticks *do* have a feel that's unique among stick manufacturers.

Rumors have abounded in recent months that this sticky situation might end up changing. But don't worry, you die-hard Regal Tip fans: According to company president Carol Calato, "After years of experimenting with different finishes we have decided to leave well enough alone. Too many drummers have gotten panic-stricken looks on their faces whenever the company mentioned a possible alteration of the finish. There will be no changes."

*Whew!* With that concern out of the way, let's take a look at four new models Regal Tip recently introduced (all with the good ol' finish). The company has been working very closely with established artists lately, using their advice to create some designs that broaden the line. These new models have a few similarities: They're all made of US hickory, they have wood tips, and they list for \$9.75. Now let's play.

### BG (Bob Gatzen)

You may not have heard of Bob Gatzen, but he's a true Renaissance Man in the drum industry. Bob has invented landmark products for Noble & Cooley and Evans (and given advice to a slew of other companies), he writes and records music in his

own studio, he starred in his own educational video for DCI on drum tuning, he owns a drum shop, and on top of all that he's a fine drummer. (Bob, just relax, please.) Anyway, he's now turned his creative eye to drumstick design, and the results are, as you might expect, impressive.

Gatzen gave a lot of thought to the design of his stick, coming up with some fresh concepts—things like "double-radius design" and "non-splintering barrel tip." But let's cut to the chase: How do they feel? At 16 3/8" in length, the *BG* model is fairly long, although it *doesn't feel* that way. In fact, it's a beautifully balanced stick, with a shaft diameter of .555" and a tip diameter of .390".

I started out spending a good deal of time on a pad with the *BGs*, and they felt great from the get-go—meaty, yet very responsive. Moving to the drums, the *BGs'* slight forward-weighted feel was perfect for laying into the snare and *digging* into the toms.

With a relatively short and uniquely shaped taper down to a barrel-shaped tip, the sound produced by these sticks on the drums was big. But the big question: How does that tip measure up on a ride cymbal? You might expect it to be a bit clangy, but actually the ride sound the *BG* produced was full, though not uncontrollable. It's sort of a surprising combination of sounds.

Bob also feels that his barrel-tip design increases the strength of the tip. It's hard to gauge how durable a tip is, because they can splinter for a variety of reasons. But I did play these sticks at two rehearsals with a relatively loud band without nicking the tips at all (although the shaft was dented a bit—as expected).

Who would this model be best suited for? Well, the *BG* is an excellent general-purpose stick that would work in a variety of situations. It's a strong stick with a durable design, yet with a feel that is truly playable. Boy, that Gatzen is a smarty.

### Steve Houghton

Steve Houghton's playing career is interesting because it covers such a broad spectrum of music, from light bop to big band and



Jim Esposito

even classical. But at the core of it all is Steve's playing—always tasteful and *very* musical. So what would you expect from his signature stick? Yes, that's right, a very musical stick that sounds oh-so nice on ride cymbals.

At 16" in length, with a shaft diameter of .555" and a tip diameter of .365", the *Steve Houghton* model is very similar to Regal Tip's successful 8A. The stick is well balanced, with more of a traditional Regal Tip feel—meaning less forward weight. It's not a whimpy stick, though. You could easily smack a tom or bash a cymbal with it without fear. But where Steve's stick really shines is on a ride cymbal. The relatively small, conical-shaped tip at the end of a solid shaft just melts on a ride cymbal—"like butta." The tip produces a slightly darker tone from the cymbal, and that tone combined with the balanced feel of the stick makes it a joy to play. Any cymbal—even a splash—turns into a potential ride cymbal under the stroke of this musical stick. If I were playing a gig where a ride cymbal is featured, I'd be sure to have this model in my stick bag.

One other suggestion: The *Steve Houghton* model might make the perfect *secondary* pair to keep in your stick bag. Let's say you're on the gig, playing along and sounding good. But then you want to change the timbre of your cymbals without actually changing your cymbals. Pull out a pair of *Houghtons* and you're there.

Tips up close (left to right): *BG*, *Allen*, *Hernandez*, and *Houghton* models.



### Carl Allen

Now here's an interesting stick. Carl Allen, one of the most sincerely swinging drummers on the scene, has come up with a sincerely unique drumstick design. At 16 $\frac{1}{4}$ ", it's long. Add to that a shaft diameter of .555", and you have a lot of wood in your hands with this stick!

The taper on the *Carl Allen* model is very short, so it looks a lit-

tle telegraph-pole-ish. I got the feeling that I could touch anything on my kit without reaching—as well as being able to "bop" most of the people in the audience! But no complaints: The balance isn't bad for such a long stick, and the weight isn't too heavy.

The most unusual part of the *Allen* model is actually the tip. The biggest challenge is describing it! A small bullet at the end of a stick? No. Maybe the Wicked Witch of the West's nose? No. How about an American-Indian arrowhead? Okay, I'm reaching here, but suffice it to say that the tip is very long and pointed.

I've seen Carl play a few times, and he likes to get a lot of different colors from his cymbals. His stick's tip shape is perfect for that. You have a myriad of cymbal sound choices at the end of a *Carl Allen* model. In a normal playing position, you get a broad sound. Lower your hand a bit, and a brasher, washier sound is produced. And if you want to put a focused point on the time, no problem, arc up on the tip. I'd recommend this stick to experienced players who could be sensitive to the different sounds available on a ride cymbal. The advantage of the *Carl Allen* model? Take two cymbals to the gig and sound like you have six!

### Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez

"El Negro" is a monstrous drummer (currently working with Michel Camilo) who you will undoubtedly be hearing more about. His solo chops are impressive, and when he effortlessly lays all of that over a steaming left-foot-clave, you're left with no doubt he will be a major force in the future of drumming.

As for his stick, the *Hernandez* model reflects a bit of the power and versatility that El Negro plays with. It's 16" long, with a short taper that leads to an oval tip (for all intents a slightly shorter version of Regal's 1A model). There's plenty of forward weight to the feel, yet the balance is very good.

As for the sound of the *Hernandez* model, the drums I played them on sang out with a solid "crack." The ride cymbals had a very open, somewhat washy sound, which suggested that this stick would work well on a tighter, more focused-sounding ride. And the straight and long shaft made playing cymbal-bell parts a joy.

The *Hernandez* model is the most traditional of the new designs reviewed, and thus would be appropriate for a wide spectrum of musical styles. A solid entry from a future great.

So there you have it—some interesting new treats to play with. But wait, Regal Tip isn't finished. Other signature models coming soon include designs from Lewis Nash (the most recorded jazz drummer of the last few years), L.A. studio up-and-comer Curt Bisquera, and a larger, maple version of the *BG*. Time to buy a bigger stick bag!



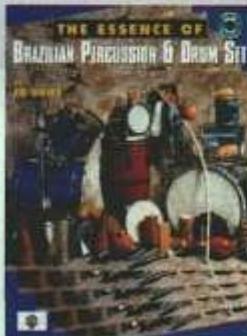
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**Ed Uribe**

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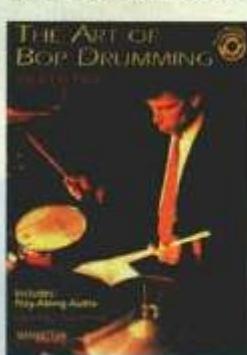
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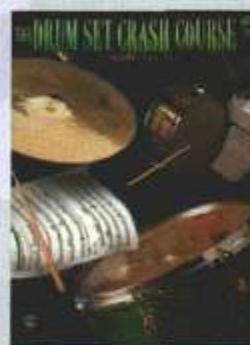
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**John Riley**

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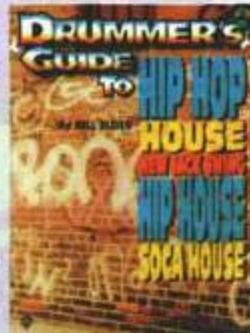
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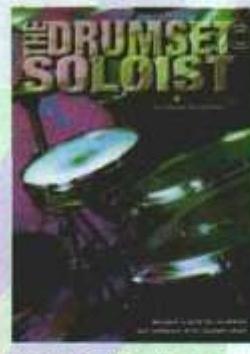
**The Drum Set Crash Course**  
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This book covers the essential foundations and grooves that will prepare the drummer for a variety of musical situations encountered on the average professional gig. Designed to be an encyclopedia of many drumming styles, *The Drum Set Crash Course* covers Afro-Cuban and Brazilian, blues, country, hip hop, jazz, reggae, rock and much more.

**Bill Elder**

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**Steve Houghton**

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**Gavin Harrison**

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LIVE'S  
CHAD GRACEY



TO THE POINT

**C**had Gracey plays in a band that has sold more than seven million records, performed hundreds of shows, graced the covers of *Spin* and *Rolling Stone*, performed at Woodstock II, put together one of the most impassioned sets of music in the MTV "Unplugged" series, and been hailed by fans (and, lately, by critics) as modern rock's savior.

Still, Gracey doesn't seem entirely comfortable with the fact that, of all the things he might do in life, he's a drummer.

"It's weird, in a way, because I've never really cared about being a drummer," Gracey admits. "Drumming was just something I got into when I was young, and I think I would have given it up a long time ago if things hadn't worked out the way they did."

Strange sentiments, coming from someone who has been praised by Neil Peart and other "name" players as one of their favorite young drummers. The compliments are easy to understand, though, once you dig into the music Chad makes with his band, Live.

Gracey's unconventional rhythms, addictive grooves, and implacable knack for emotional impact are the unsung chemicals in the band's artistic formula. Few modern rock drummers use the toms and cymbals more musically, and Gracey's ghost notes and efficient strokes belie his complete disinterest for any formal practice or training. For all that, Gracey simply shrugs and chalks it up to his ear.

"I know what I want to hear, and I guess I'm able to play whatever I hear in my head," he says. "I'm sure lessons could help me be a better player in some ways, but I'm more interested in being a good musician for this band than in being a good drummer. As long as I'm happy with what I'm playing and the guys are happy with it too, that's fine with me."

Gracey's priorities haven't changed since the seeds of Live were first planted a decade ago in York, a small blue-collar town in southern Pennsylvania, where Gracey and his

bandmates attended the same junior high and first played together under the name Public Affection. Even then, they wrote songs resonating with spiritual and political overtones, inspired in part by singer Ed Kowalczyk's studies of Henry Miller and philosopher Jiddu Krishnamurti.

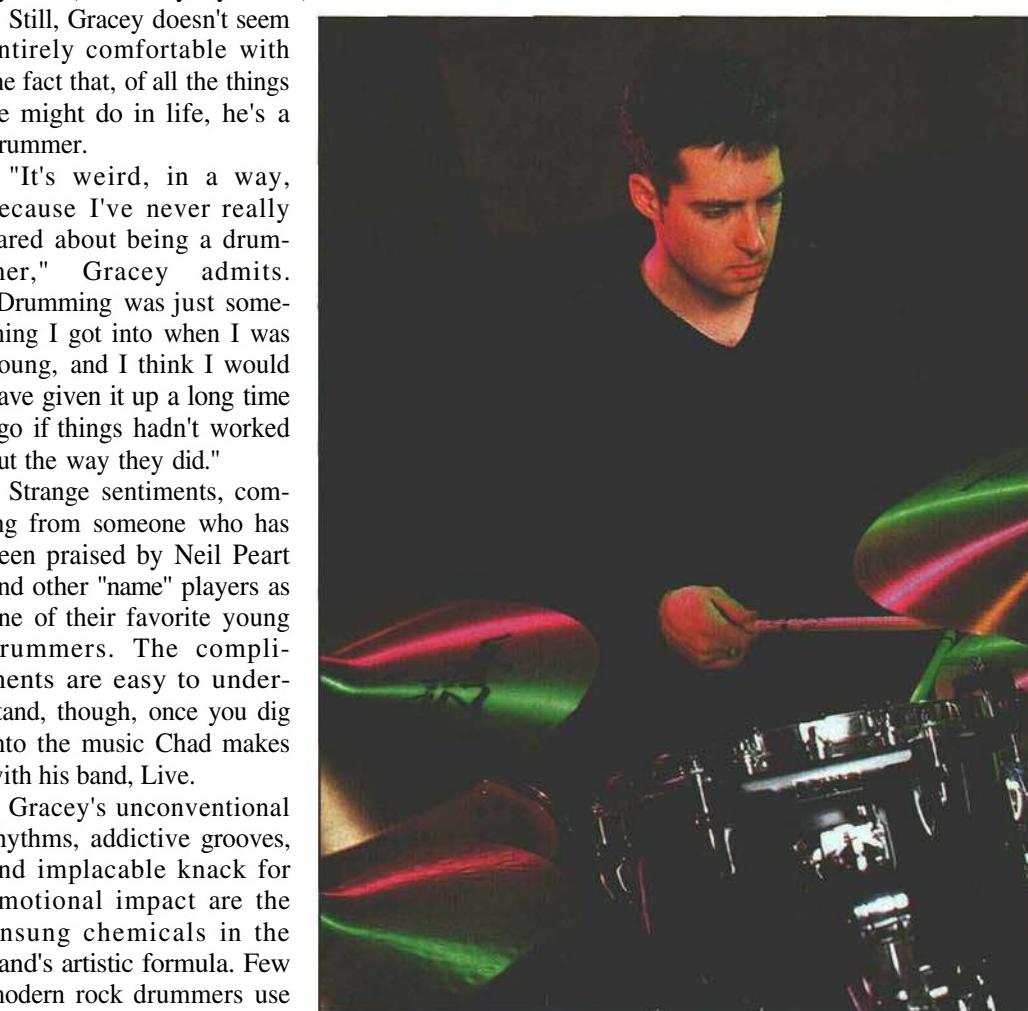
For his part, Gracey saw it as little more than something fun to do after school and on weekends with his best friends. Their first tunes reeked of U2 and Midnight Oil, but it mattered little to fans hooked on the band's youthful charm. Gracey and his bandmates decided to forego college, changed their name to Live, and released the tantalizing *Mental Jewelry* before they were out of their teens. Through it all, Gracey simply didn't have time to think about the commitment he was making to music.

Now twenty-five, he has since married and moved to Portland, Oregon, where he joins the frequent-flier club for his treks toward Pennsylvania for band rehearsals. For all his supposed apathy for drumming, Gracey will see nothing but sticks, skins, shells, and rims for the next two years, as Live tours in support of its haunting third album, *Secret Samadhi*.

Some will undoubtedly see the disc as a backward step.

The sing-along anthems that sent 1994's *Throwing Copper* to platinum six times over are scarce on the new album. Though it's also Live's most rhythmically modest effort to date, Gracey latched onto an unprecedented emphasis on mood and atmosphere to steer his performance into new directions. If nothing else, he says, *Secret Samadhi* marks the band's greatest artistic leap.

"If we'd wanted to we could have written songs that sounded just like 'I Alone' or 'Lightning Crashes,' but I don't think we had it in us to make *this* kind of record before," he says. "There's a lot of depth here. These may or may not be the kind of songs people will love on the first listen. But if they really sit down and let the music sink in, we think that's when it will really grab them."

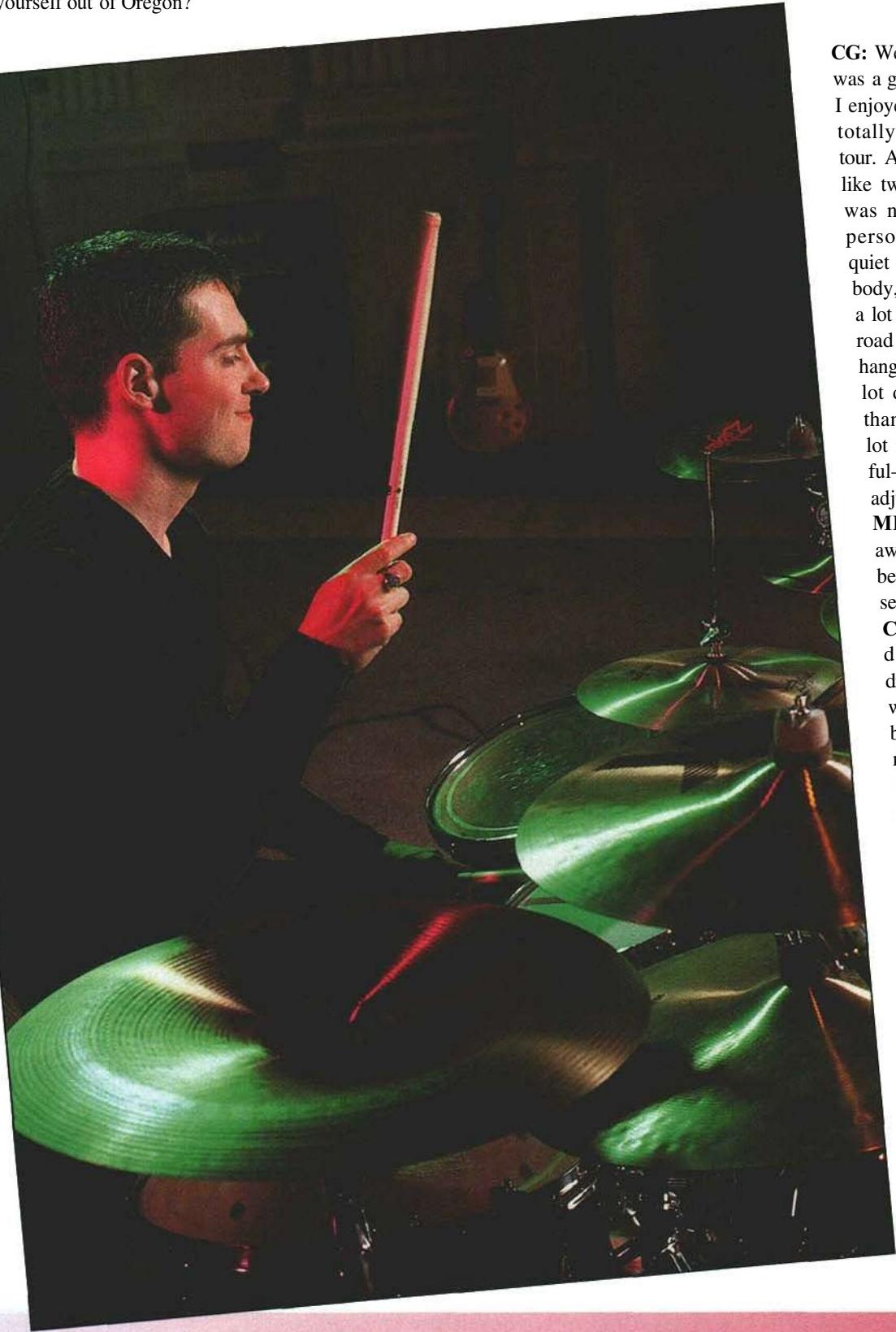


by Matt Peiken

Photos by Ebet Roberts

**MP:** A lot has happened for you in the past couple of years. You got married, moved to Portland, built a house. Were you anxious to get back into the band thing, or was it hard pulling yourself out of Oregon?

I'm a pretty laid-back person, and I really don't like the spotlight. I don't care if people even notice my drum parts, as long as they like the music,"



**CG:** Well, let me put it this way: It was a good, long break for me and I enjoyed every minute of it. I was totally burned out after the last tour. All the travel and something like two hundred fifty shows—it was non-stop. I'm the kind of person who really enjoys the quiet times. I'm sort of a homebody, I suppose, and I just spent a lot of time after we got off the road working on my house and hanging out with my wife. It's a lot different vibe in Portland than it is in Pennsylvania—a lot more laid-back and beautiful—and I had no trouble at all adjusting to that.

**MP:** Were you completely away from music in the time between the last tour and the sessions for the new album?

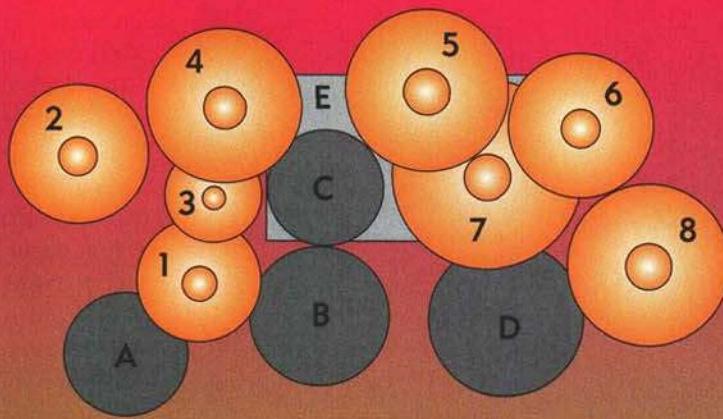
**CG:** I didn't play at all. I don't even have a set of drums at my house. I figure we get together enough as a band that I play as much as I need to, and I've never been someone who likes practicing drums on my own. In fact, I can't stand playing by myself—I just won't do it. My whole life as a drummer has been spent in this band. That's the only way I know how to play and the only way I *want* to play—with these guys. But I felt more prepared for this record than for the last one. I think we all felt that way.

At one point, when we were touring for *Mental Jewelry*, we stopped writing on the

road, and that really put some pressure on us afterward because we didn't have any songs ready when we came off the road. That left us in limbo for the next few months until we actually got into the writing groove for the songs that ended up on *Throwing Copper*. We were fine once we got going, but we were really sweatin' it there for a while. We didn't want to be in that position this time around, so we really trained ourselves to write on the road during the last tour. We'd play a couple of songs at soundcheck, maybe work on some new things for a half-hour or so. And we were on the road for so long that we had a lot of songs and ideas for songs after we came back from our break.

We got off the road in late September of 1995, and we got back together in November, demoed a bunch of songs that we'd written on the road, and then took a couple of months off before going off to Jamaica to write some more. We ended up writing three songs down

## Chad's Setup



### Drumset: Pearl Masters Series in black finish

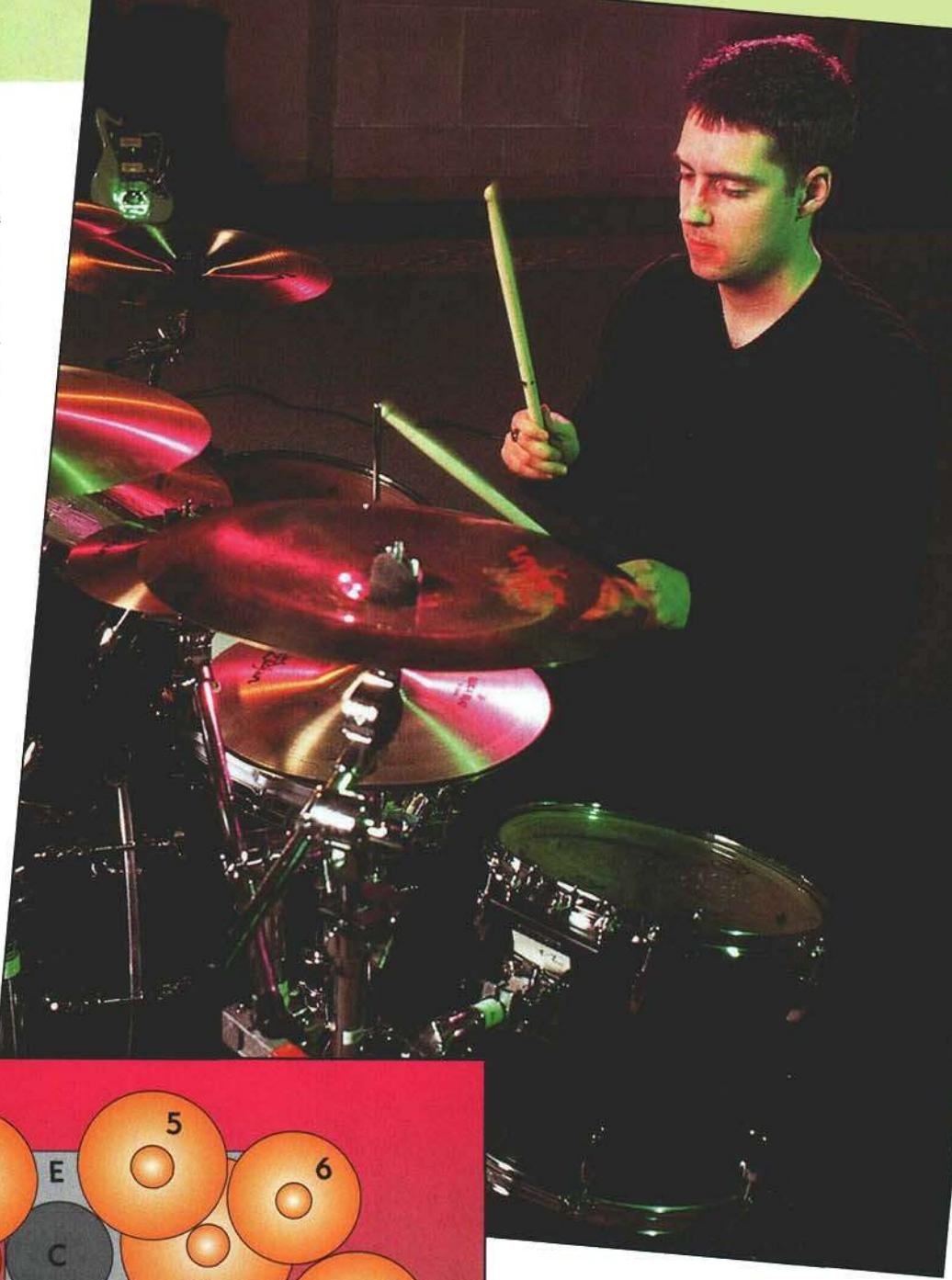
- A. 11 x 13 tom
- B. 3½ x 14 piccolo snare
- C. 10 x 12 tom
- D. 16 x 16 floor tom
- E. 16 x 22 bass drum

### Hardware: Pearl

- Sticks:** Pro-Mark 5.4 model (hickory) with wood tip

### Cymbals: Zildjian

- 1. 13" A Quick Beat hi-hats
- 2. 14" Oriental China Trash
- 3. 8" K splash
- 4. 16" A medium-thin crash
- 5. 17" A Rock crash
- 6. 15" K Dark thin crash
- 7. 20" A" heavy ride
- 8. 17" K China Boy



there—"Unsheathed," "Ghost," and "Gas Head Goes West"—and we started recording at the Hit Factory in New York City in May.

**MP:** Those are pretty diverse environments—from the road to Jamaica to New York. Do you think there's a distinct difference between the songs you wrote on the road and the ones you wrote on the beach?

**CG:** Maybe on some subconscious level it made a difference, but I don't think it's anything you can hear on the record. A guy at our label,

Radioactive, came up with the idea of sending us to Jamaica. I guess his thinking was we could just hang out, relax, enjoy the sun—and we're not fools, you know. We figured, "Sure,

why not?"

We definitely had a good time there, but I don't know if there's anything that came out of Jamaica that we

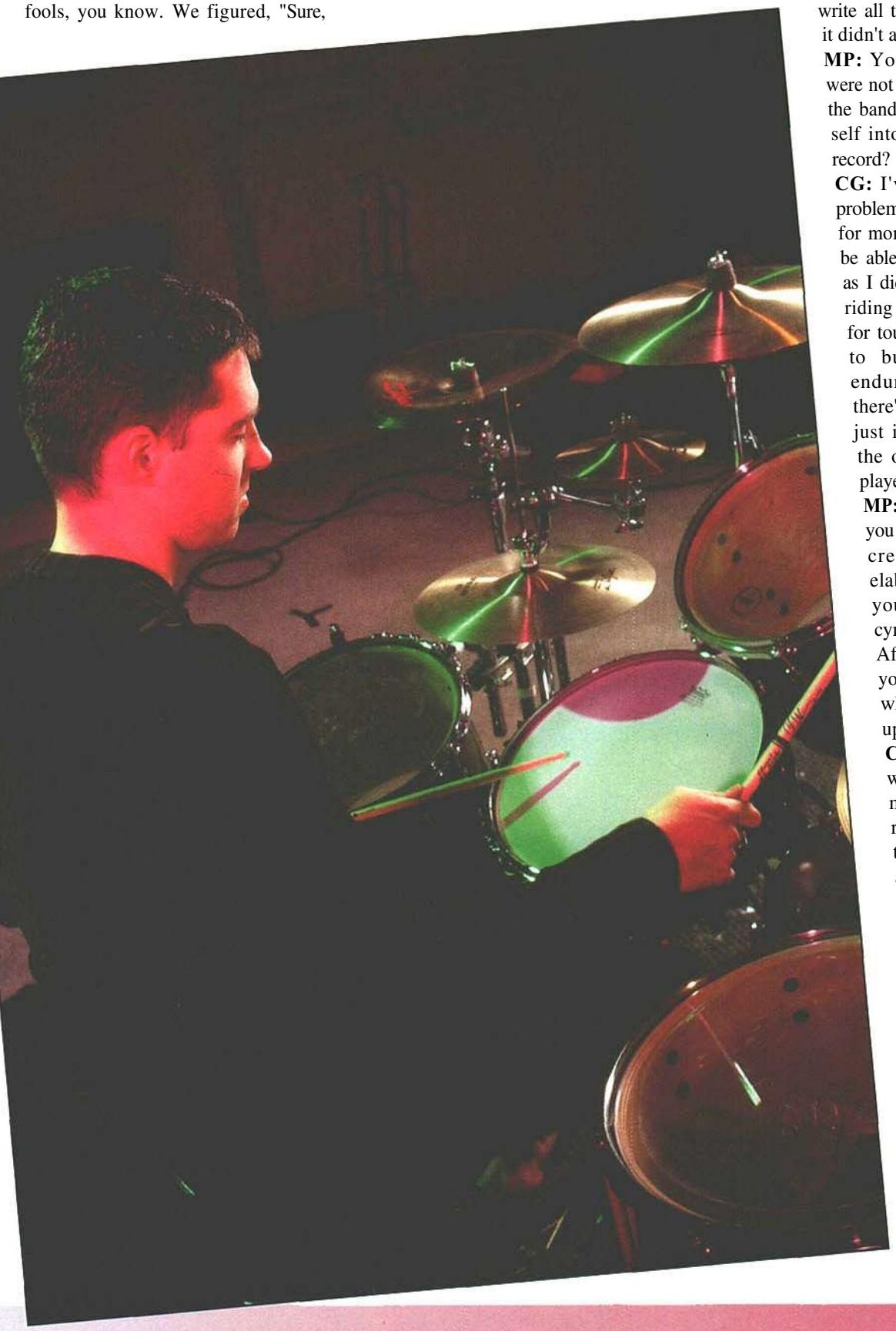
wouldn't have come up with in any other place at that time. You'd probably have to ask Ed or Chad [Taylor, guitarist] about that, because they write all the songs. I'm pretty sure it didn't affect my drum parts.

**MP:** You mentioned that you were not playing while away from the band. How did you get yourself into playing shape for the record?

**CG:** I've never really had a problem with that. I can take off for months and months and still be able to play as well, I think, as I did before. It's kind of like riding a bicycle for me. Now, for touring, it takes some time to build up the kind of endurance you need. But if there's any rustiness at all, it's just in remembering some of the older songs we haven't played in a while.

**MP:** But some of the parts you come up with are pretty creative and deceptively elaborate, particularly how you weave the toms and cymbals into the basic beat. After a long absence, don't you ever trip over yourself when you're first picking up the sticks?

**CG:** Not really. A lot of what I play might sound more complicated than it really is. For me, something like hitting the tom at a certain point in the beat might just be taking my right hand and, instead of hitting the ride cymbal, hitting a drum. Then on the next stroke, instead of hitting the snare with my left hand, I might hit the hi-hat. It's really just a right-left-right-left sort of thing, and trying different things with that. My bass drum parts are usually pretty simple, and



"I've never wanted to sit and learn every Neil Peart part. I've always wanted to come up with my own parts."

I don't do a lot of fast double hits or strokes with one hand.

**MP:** When you were writing on the road, did you spend much time thinking about or working out your drum parts?

**CG:** It depended on the song. Some things come together for us very naturally. I'll hear something that Chad is trying to do and something will immediately come into my head. I usually get an impression pretty quickly of what I want to do, but sometimes I have to tinker with a song for a while until the part sounds right.

Sometimes it's not so much a part I'll have to work out, but some of the accents and crashes. I like to throw snare strokes into some weird places because I think they help to bring out a verse or chorus and keep the rhythm flowing. But I have to make sure I'm not doing something that gets in the way of what Ed or Chad—or even Pat [Dahlheimer, bass]—is doing.

In the song "T.B.D." [from *Throwing Copper*], we start off really softly, but there's still a lot going on in the rhythm. I think Pat and I are probably playing more early on, during the quiet parts, than when the song really gets moving. When you're playing that softly, every note you play or don't play really affects the music, but the notes I put in there aren't getting in the way of Pat's bass line. And once the volume builds up and we're all laying into it toward the end, I'm not playing as many notes. I'm just trying to really kick the song.

**MP:** A lot of drummers today recognize you for the unique rhythms you come up with. For instance, what made you use the maraca in your ride hand for "Pain Lies On The Riverside" [from *Mental Jewelry*]?

**CG:** Chad had these crazy African

maracas with old, beat-up, rusted bottle caps in them. I was just trying something different, so I picked one of them and started using it in that song. I didn't give any real thought to it. I'd never heard that done before. It was just a sudden inspiration, and it clicked.

I think if I would have let it freak

me out that I was using a maraca instead of a stick hitting a cymbal, I'm not sure I could have played it so easily. Maybe if I would have tried something like that for the first time now, it would be more difficult because I'd be more set in my ways. But I was just a kid then. I hadn't been playing drums all that long, and I didn't know any better.

**MP:** Have you taken more of a role in the songwriting these days? Or do you even want to get involved in that at all?

**CG:** No, not really. I'm a little up front these days lately about arrange-

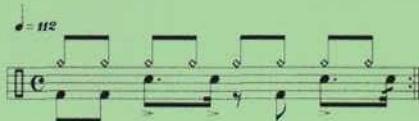
## GRACE NOTES: CHAD ON RECORD

by Matt Peiken

Few modern rock drummers today weave the toms into their beats as seamlessly as Chad Gracey, who also uses grace notes and a dynamic ride hand to lend emotional impact to the music and propel the vibe. Through the following examples, pulled from Live's three albums, you get a glimpse of how Chad has pulled in the reins a bit for the sake of the groove.

### From *Mental Jewelry*:

Chad stamped his signature on "Pain Lies On The Riverside" by holding a maraca in his ride hand and playing it as if it were 8th notes on a cymbal. The result? A 16th-note effect.



"Mother Earth Is A Vicious Child" is a perfect example of Chad's interesting tom-tom approach. He has his snares turned off on this one too, adding to the "tom" effect.



### From *Throwing Copper*:

In the chorus of "Iris," Chad rides the floor tom with both hands, using alternate sticking. This repetitive right-left approach is a mainstay of his playing. (It sounds particularly cool on this beat.)



The verse of "Shit Towne" features a subtle but very interesting little pattern played between his ride cymbal and floor tom.



### From *Secret Samadhi*:

"Rattlesnake," the opening cut of the new record, shows off Gracey's knack for well-placed accents. He begins this passage with sticks, then repeats it with brushes after the first chorus.



"Lakini's Juice" offers the kind of straight-ahead romp that Gracey seems to kick into each of Live's radio-friendly anthems.



ment and maybe how a song will develop dynamically, but the initial ideas still come from Chad and Ed. I don't play guitar, you know, and I really don't have any aspirations to write music from scratch. It's just not what I do. I'm really content to just kick back and be the drummer.

**MP:** Your playing on *Secret Samadhi* seems much more straight-ahead than what we've heard from you before.

**CG:** Yeah, I'm playing a lot less. I don't know whether you'd call that maturing or not, but I think experience has something to do with it. *Mental Jewelry* was very much driven by bass and drums, whereas we really brought out the guitar parts more for *Throwing Copper*. I think with the new record, it's not just about writing good songs, but sort of creating an atmosphere to go along with them.

A lot of that comes from just playing to what was there and trying not to overdo things. Not that I think I overplayed on the other records or anything like that, but most of the songs on the new record are more mellow than the songs on *Throwing Copper*. The tempos are more similar and they all seemed to call for more groove.

Once I heard what was going on in the music, I just had to switch gears and lay in the pocket. I may not be doing as much on the toms as I did before, but I made the parts interesting in my own little way.

"Ghost" is an example of a song that threw me for a while. The drum part in the verse came to me right away, but I had to really think about the chorus, which seems kind of funny because it's really just a straight-ahead rhythm. At first, I was playing around in my head with a lot of different ideas, and I tried different things that might have sounded good on their own, but they were way off for this song.

"Ghost" was one of the songs we wrote at soundcheck, so I took the tape home and listened to it, and

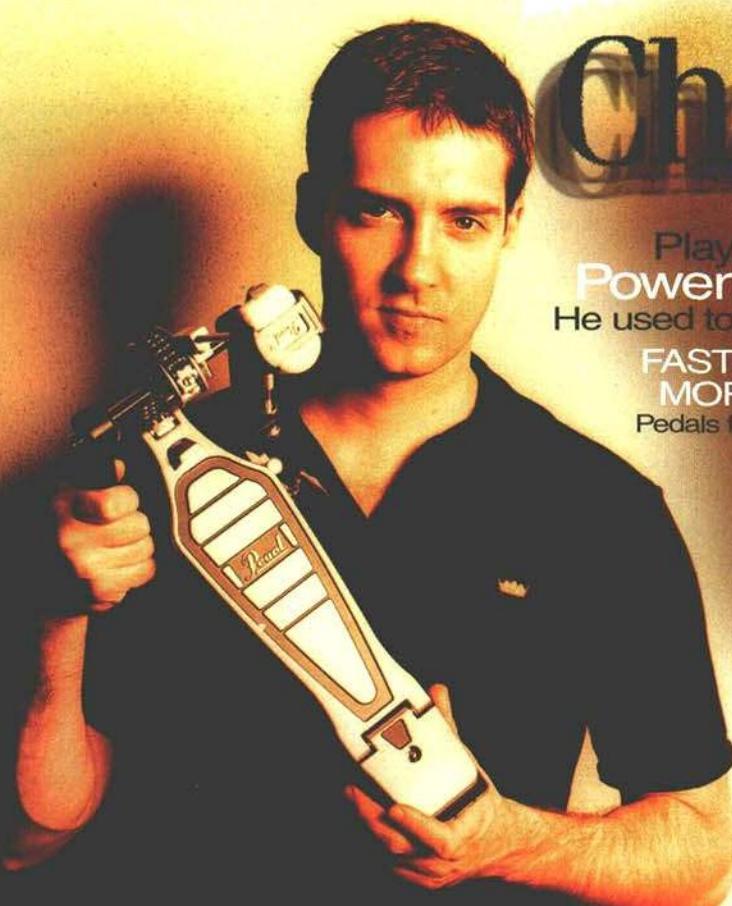


# Chad Gracely

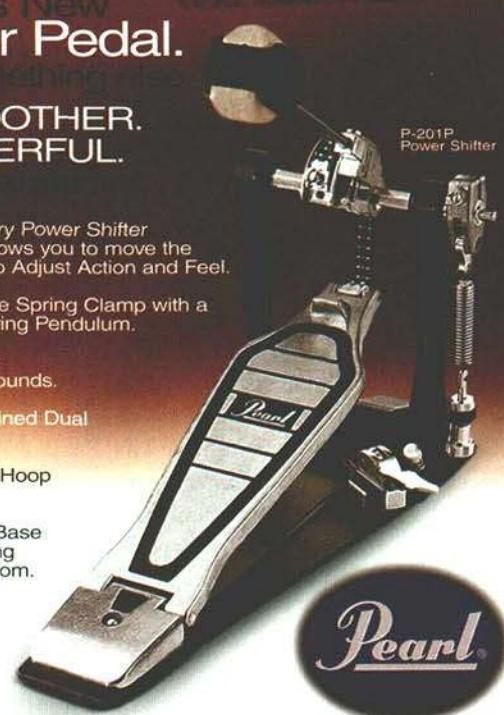
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as soon as I settled into this real basic beat, it sounded good and I knew that's what I needed for this song. And as it turns out, most of the songs on this record called for that kind of approach. It wasn't anything I told myself I had to do. It just worked out that way.

**MP:** Have you changed your setup much since the last record or tour?

**CG:** Not really, except that I've gone to bigger cymbals now. All my cymbals are basically one inch bigger in diameter than they were before, just so I could get a heavier sound in the studio, which is something I felt I needed for the new songs. I didn't necessarily want louder sounds, just maybe darker sounds.

I'm also going with coated Remo Ambassador heads now. I used to play the Attack double-ply heads, which worked really well for *Throwing Copper* and when we were on the road. But in the studio this time around, I wanted something more mellow and ambient, almost like a traditional jazz sound. I don't know if that comes through on the recording, but I could hear it when I played, and it probably affected my parts a little because I was

hearing things differently.

**MP:** Why did the band decide to co-produce the new album as opposed to leaving it in the hands of an outside producer, as you had in the past?

**CG:** It had a lot to do with the fact that we didn't want to work with Jerry Harrison again. Don't get me wrong—we love Jerry—but we just wanted to change things up and see how that would affect our music. Jay Healy, who co-produced with us this time, is a friend of ours who worked with us six or seven years ago on a demo we did for Giant Records. We had sort of a family-type relationship with him, and we knew he was a good engineer.

We didn't go into this album wanting or knowing we were going to produce ourselves. Jay was helping us during pre-production and making a few suggestions here and there. But once we got in the studio, he became the engineer and was completely consumed with that job. So we just had to take the reins and not have anyone hold our hands anymore.

We're the kind of band that can lose its direction pretty quickly as far as work goes. We're not necessarily the most disci-

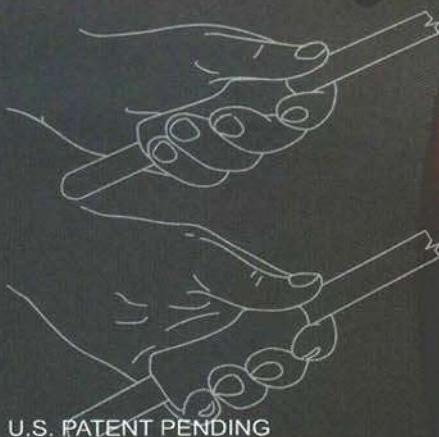
plined band. I mean, when the four of us get together, we might not feel any vibe going in rehearsal or in the studio, so we'll just decide to go do something else together instead of kicking ourselves in the butt. When we were actually recording, maybe one of us would come in at 1:00 and someone else would wander in at 1:30, and we'd just relax awhile. Once we got to our instruments and started playing, we'd get down to business. But sometimes it would take a while for that to happen.

In the end, I think it all worked out fine for this record, and what we got turned out great. But for the next record, I don't know. We might even have Jerry come back in or maybe someone else, just to have someone to say, "You be here at this specific time," because I think we work better that way.

**MP:** By not having a producer to guide you, did you take more ownership of your drum sound this time around than ever before?

**CG:** I left most of that up to the engineer, though I really took more of a role with my snare sound. I used a lot more snare drums than I had before. Most of them were pic-

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colos—I've always been a big piccolo fan—but this time I played a greater variety. I played wood piccolos, brass piccolos—some that were deeper-pitched or maybe smaller in diameter.

I've been into piccolo snares since before we recorded *Mental Jewelry*. You get a lot more out of the drum at lower volumes, but you also get the kind of crack you can't get with bigger drums. And you'd be surprised at how diverse the sound can get just by using *different* piccolos, maybe even more so than with standard-size snares, because it's such an immediate punch. My Pearl brass piccolo is my mainstay, but I probably ended up using about four different snares on the record.

**MP:** You talked a little before about how you physically play your parts, by hitting different drums or cymbals while keeping the right-left-right-left pattern in your fills. How did you develop that particular approach?

**CG:** Pretty much from when I just started out playing, when I was about fifteen. I bought a drumset a month or two before I joined the band, and the first thing I

remember playing to was a Beatles record—just because it seemed easy to play. From there, I'd play to Tony Thompson with the Power Station and to some Chili Peppers records. I've never really thought much about my style; I guess it just seemed like a natural and easy way to play.

Not that I'm lazy or anything, but when it comes to drums, I've never really had a desire to work on anything just so I could play some crazy fill. That's just not me. Like I said, if it wasn't for this band, I don't think I would have kept playing the drums at all. But on the other side of it, I also don't ever want to feel like I can't do something in a song because I'm not able to play it. So I suppose if I thought of something that would work well in a song and I couldn't play it, I'd work on it a little to see if I could make it happen.

**MP:** How long ago did you realize that playing the drums wasn't all that important to you?

**CG:** Probably when I was in about ninth or tenth grade, around '86 or '87. Back then, I was into playing music, but only because it was with these guys, not because I felt so

driven to play drums. And I knew that right away because I couldn't stand playing by myself. I've never been into practicing alone just to get better. I've never wanted to sit and learn every Neil Peart part. I've always wanted to come up with my own parts, and it's always been about the music we make in this band.

**MP:** Though you say you never really tried patterning yourself after other drummers early on, have any drummers influenced or inspired your style in the past few years?

**CG:** Yeah, probably more in the past couple of years than at any other time. I really like the way Eric Kretz plays with Stone Temple Pilots, not so much the things he plays, but what his parts do for the music. Matt Cameron's another guy I'm really into. He has a real distinct style, but everything he plays enhances the music.

I've never been into drummers who can play a million miles an hour and do all those gymnastics. I think that's kind of boring, actually, and it's not really fun to listen to. Eric and Matt just hang back and do some cool, tasteful stuff. I try to keep that kind of philosophy in mind when I'm coming up with my own parts, but I think

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that sort of comes naturally to me, too. I'm a pretty laid-back person and I really don't like the spotlight. I don't care if people even notice my drum parts, as long as they like the music.

**MP:** What did your parents think about you guys, at such an early age, deciding to pursue the band full time?

**CG:** When we first started, I kind of had other ideas about what I was going to do in life. I really had an interest in going into the medical field someday, maybe becoming a doctor. I still have an interest in that, actually, but I've never looked back and thought, "Gee, maybe I should have done that instead." My parents have been supportive of me all the way. All our parents have been. They could see we were pretty serious about the music and pretty confident we could go somewhere with it, especially during our senior year of high school, when we made the commitment to hold off on college and see where we could take things.

I was never nervous about doing that because I wasn't alone. I had three other guys determined to take the jump with me. We just decided we were going to do this no matter what happened, and we were going to *make* it no matter what happened. I don't know if it was just young, dumb enthusiasm or what, but even back then, we were really confident in ourselves. I do marvel now at how big we've become, but I can't say we didn't expect or hope for it. People think we're this overnight success, but a lot of them don't know we've been a band for eleven years, so it seems very gradual to us.

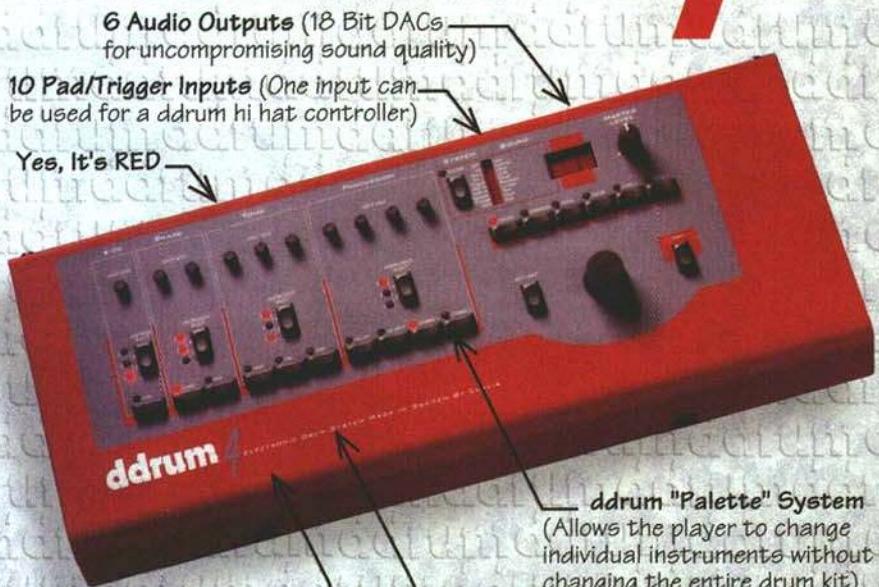
**MP:** When the band's popularity really began to skyrocket in 1995, did that catch you off guard or did you enjoy it?

**CG:** I thought it was incredible, really, and it was a fun time for us. The whole year was a real progression—we started in the clubs, then we got excited about moving up to the theaters, then we got to move into 30,000-seaters. It was just this amazing climb, and it was funny because our booking agent predicted that we'd be doing amphitheaters by the summer of '95. We thought he was out of his mind. Since then, we've come to find out that we really like playing the bigger places.

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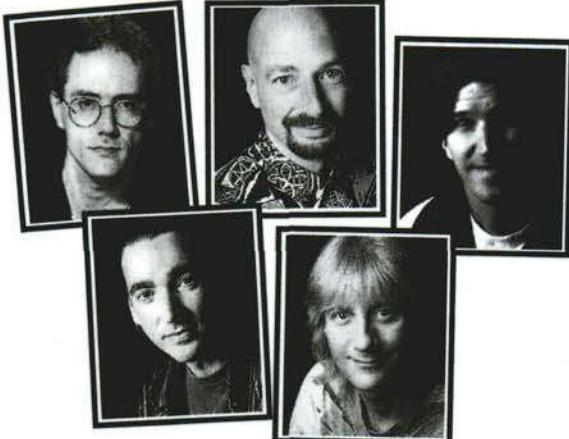


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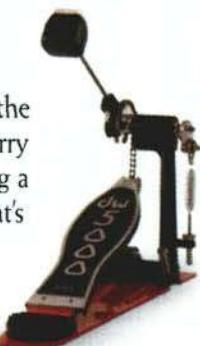
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at us. From the outset, though, we've always seen ourselves as a band that could play those kinds of places—not necessarily an arena band, but a larger-venue band. We don't tailor the music to that, but we definitely have it in mind once we've written a song. We have a good idea what will go over well in the bigger places and what won't. Larger stages also open us up to doing creative things with lighting and video. We're opening the new tour in theaters, just to get our feet wet, but then we're going right into the amphitheaters and big arenas.

**MP:** Looking back to your first recording sessions, how did you react, personally, to the pressures of working in a studio?

**CG:** I actually liked it, especially for songs where I'd already had the drum parts down in my mind from rehearsing them. The only times I really got uptight about anything were when Jerry Harrison would make some suggestions for arrangements that conflicted with a part I'd already come up with. His ideas were great, but I didn't want to change my part. It just took time for me not to take those things personally.

**MP:** When you're recording now, are you

playing along with the whole band or just to a rhythm track?

**CG:** Everything that's on tape pretty much came from "the" take. It may not have come in one or two takes, but we played all our parts at the same time and kept the best take from the four or five that we might cut for a song. Ed overdubbed most of his vocals and his guitar parts, but we kept everything else.

We've always recorded like that, and I think that just comes from playing together live all the time. We're just so used to playing that way that it's natural for us to carry that over into the studio, and I think the energy and spontaneity of that really comes through in the music.

**MP:** It's probably starting to get difficult for you now to put together a set list without leaving somebody's favorites out of the mix.

**CG:** Well, we obviously want to promote the new record and play those songs as much as we can. We've put together a seventy-five-minute set that has all the new songs except one. We've got three songs from *Throwing Copper* in there and one from *Mental Jewelry*. At this point, we figure we've pretty much played everything off the first record that needs to be played, and we're ready to move on to new stuff. I hope our fans are, too.

**MP:** Do you ever see yourself getting involved with any outside projects?

**CG:** The only outside projects I see doing have nothing to do with music. I'm really getting into carpentry. My father's a carpenter, and I like building stuff and fixing things around the house. I just remodeled one of the rooms in my house, which I'm pretty proud of. But as far as music goes, this band is the only thing I want to do. I've never played drums without these guys and I probably never will.

I'm married now, I have a house, and music will never be the most important thing in my life. I'm not saying I don't enjoy what we do. I enjoy it very much—we all do—and we plan to be making music together for a long, long time. In some ways, I think we're just now touching on some of our most creative ideas, and it would be a shame to cut that potential short. But if it ended tomorrow, I wouldn't be too upset about it. We'd all still be great friends, and I'd just go home to my quiet life, be with my wife, and blend into the scenery.

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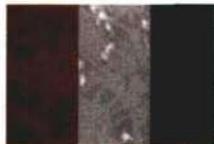
DW Drum Artists shown above (clockwise from top left):  
Herman Matthews III (Tower Of Power), Denny Fongheiser (LA studio),  
Sean Kinney (Alice In Chains), Tris Imboden (Chicago)  
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rod may be a relatively insignificant part to most, it represents only one example of the uncompromising attention to detail you'll find throughout our Collector's Series drums. Superior sound, spectacular looks—from a single tension rod to an entire drumset—our dedication to perfecting all the details not only

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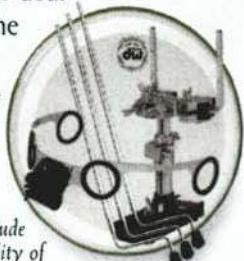
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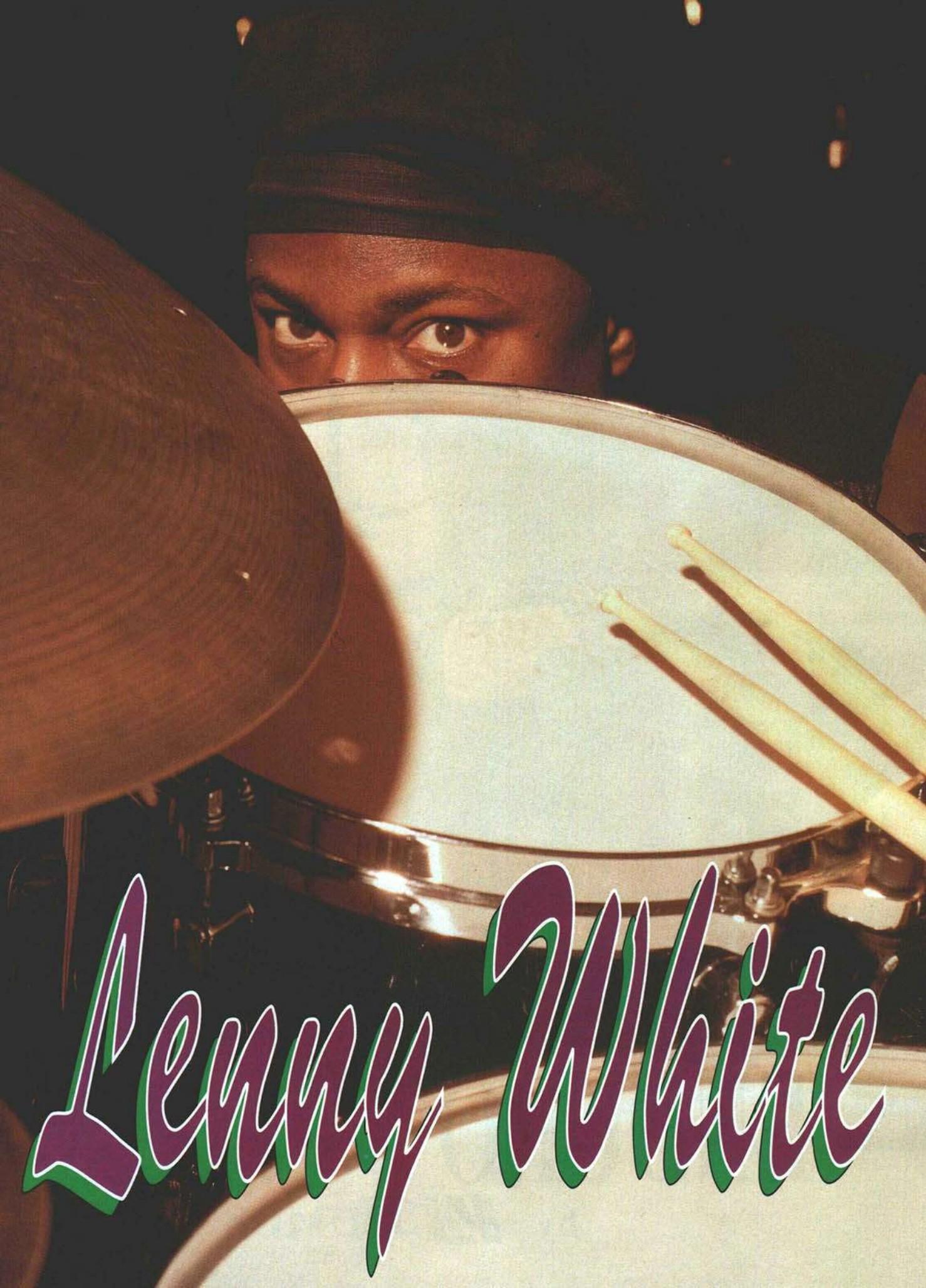
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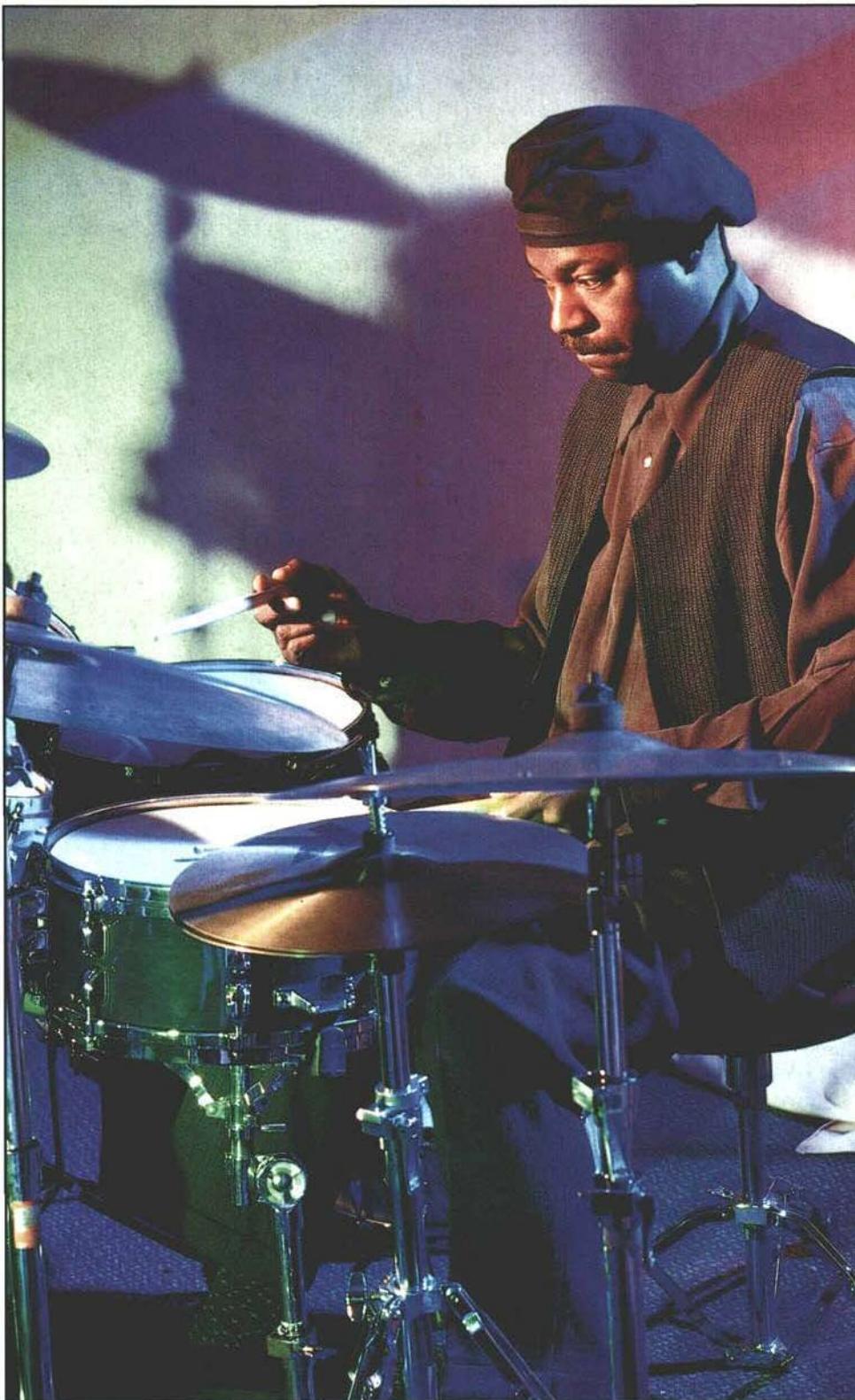
Lenny White

**T**wenty years ago, give or take a few months, Lenny White appeared on the cover of *Modern Drummer*, wearing one of his trademark wide-brim hats of the era. Lenny was one of the big stories of drumming, if only for his seminal role in Chick Corea's Return To Forever—forget Jackie McLean, Freddie Hubbard, Stan Getz, Gato Barbieri, Joe Henderson, Gil Evans—oh, and the legendary Miles Davis *Bitches Brew* sessions.

Lenny's drumming on Return To Forever songs like "After The Cosmic Rain" pretty much pegged fusion for the 70s, combining the liquid pulse of jazz with the bombast of rock. Of course, hindsight is 20/20, but even some 70s critics complained that fusion and its long-haired cousin, prog rock, had become lumbering, circus beasts, strutting comically seven beats to the bar. No juggler was content with three balls in the air, no drummer with a paltry three toms. At its best, fusion struck musical friendships, as with Latin and rock; at its worst, it was unashamedly arbitrary and cluttered.

Lenny can look back with a straight face. He traded excesses with the best of them, but it wasn't like he was being paid by the note. He made it all flow. Once in a while, he'd leave you at the edge of your seat, wondering if he'd make it home for the downbeat. Some little quirk would tumble out—some flam suggestive of Tony, or some swelling roll evoking Art—defying the slick, ambitious chops so prevalent in fusion. He even looked different from the others, what with his ride on the "wrong" side of his kit. (White plays ride rhythms with his left hand.) Lenny's decidedly atypical and looser approach made transitions

## A New Brew



by T. Bruce Witten

photos by Alex Solca

between straight-ahead jazz and rock among the most believable of his era.

*MD* was a slim, black & white publication in 1977. By the time the colors unfurled, full-page ads showing Lenny behind a rich, aqua-stained drumset were commonplace. The custom tint was a forerunner of the more adventurous lacquer jobs we see today, and the stylish pose he struck for Tama made for an enduring alliance.

It seemed that the high life and Lenny White parted company near the turn of the decade, barely after his thirtieth birthday. His name no longer cropped up like it used to, and many fans wondered what had become of him. But it's not like Lenny stopped working in the 80s. To the contrary, he pumped out records at a fair clip. Perhaps it's just that the glamour boys stopped calling and Lenny figured that it was time to become the author of his own destiny: *He'd be the one assembling bands and phoning to arrange record dates.*

Once in a while Lenny will get a little wistful about the way he's no longer a household word—understandable for a musician who helped Miles and Chick give the boot to the status quo. The truth be known, Lenny would appreciate a little more respect for his role in the history of his calling. But engage him in talk about Art Blakey, Philly Joe Jones, or Roy Haynes, and all bitterness goes to the wind. Understand, these were his peers. This is the milieu that Lenny evokes in his drumming these days on his solo albums (*Renderers Of Spirit*, his most recent), with Wallace Roney, Geri Allen, Victor Bailey, Foley, Jerry Brooks, Vince Evans, and Michel Petrucciani, and on numerous record productions for Hip Bop.

Listen to any of Lenny's work, and it's as plain as the nose on your face: If the drums shine, everybody shines. He makes records that sound the way records were supposed to sound in the mid-'60s, when, as a fourteen-year-old, he had his heart set on playing the trumpet.

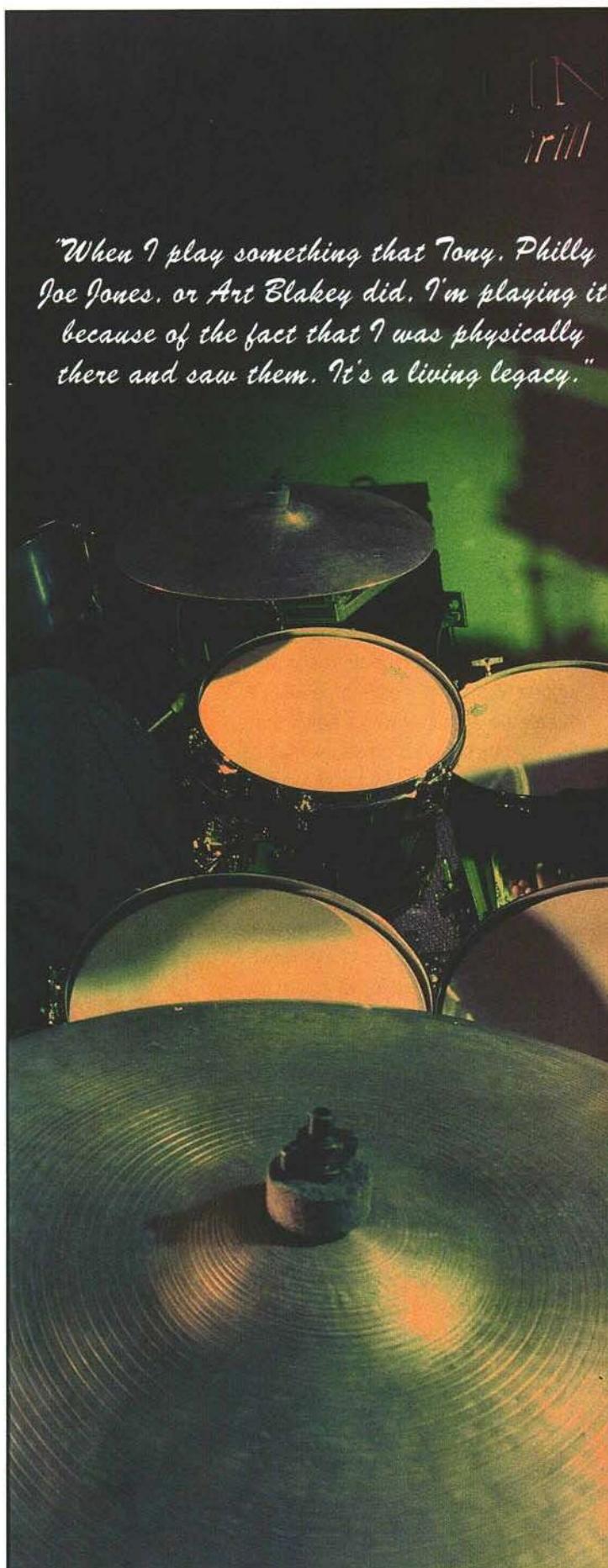
**BW:** Do you think your interest in the trumpet was due to Miles? I remember Bill Cosby remarking on the extent of Miles' hipness in the '60s.

**LW:** I hadn't even discovered Miles from that perspective yet, but it just so happened that I had an affinity for trumpet players—Miles, Freddie Hubbard, Woodie Shaw, and now Wallace Roney. The trumpet/drums hookup is great when it's hooked right: you know, Tony and Miles, Freddie and Art

Blakey, Lee [Morgan] and Art Blakey.

I went to a specialized high school, the High School of Art and Design. That's when I discovered Miles. My father had records by Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Count Basie, Duke Ellington, and Lester Young; those are the records that I grew up listening to around the house. On the radio I listened to the Drifters and the Coasters. Miles was around. When I was seventeen years old I heard a record by Miles

*"When I play something that Tony, Philly Joe Jones, or Art Blakey did, I'm playing it because of the fact that I was physically there and saw them. It's a living legacy."*





Davis, and the drummer on the record was seventeen, and that was Tony Williams. And at that point, I said, "That's it, man, that's me." I immediately got this kinship with Tony Williams because we were the same age. From that point on I was into Miles Davis.

**BW:** I find it exciting that you experienced the masters of the horn and drums live, and not just on records.

**LW:** I have to say that's the one thing that was a real boost for me. You know, playing traditional jazz music, my major influences

are Tony Williams, Philly Joe Jones, Elvin Jones, and Art Blakey. When I play something that Tony, Philly Joe Jones, or Art Blakey did, I'm playing it because of the fact that I was physically there and saw them do that. So it's a living legacy; it's not something where I just listened to a record and emulated what they do—of course, I'm emulating what they do anyway, because I'm not them—but I'm getting it from another perspective. I actually sat and talked with these people, and I saw the way they

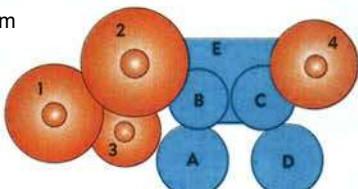
## The Bop Kit

**Drumset:** Starclassic in aqua fade finish

- A. 5 x 14 wood snare
- B. 8 x 12 tom
- C. 9 x 13 tom
- D. 14 x 14 floor tom
- E. 16 x 18 bass drum

**Cymbals:** Zildjian

- 1. 20" K ride with rivets
- 2. 22" K ride
- 3. 14" K hi-hats
- 4. 18" K crash



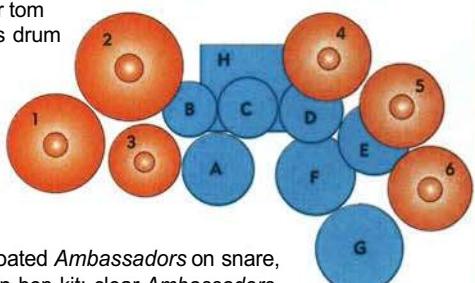
## The Fusion Kit

**Drumset:** Starclassic in aqua fade finish

- A. 5 x 14 wood snare
- B. 8 x 10 tom
- C. 8 x 12 tom
- D. 9 x 13 tom
- E. 10 x 14 tom
- F. 16 x 16 floor tom
- G. 16 x 18 floor tom
- H. 16x22 bass drum

**Cymbals:** Zildjian

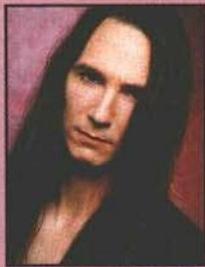
- 1. 20" K China
- 2. 22" K ride
- 3. 14" K hi-hats
- 4. 18" K crash
- 5. 17" K crash
- 6. 17" K crash



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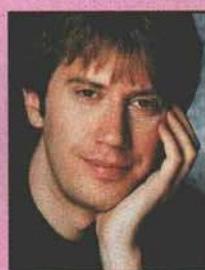
**Mike Terrana**  
Terrana; Tony Macalpine;  
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**Scott Rockenfield**  
Queensryche



**Joel Rosenblatt**  
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**Tommy Igoe**  
New York Voices; Art  
Garfunkel; Clinician



**Gerry Brown**  
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**Paul Delong**  
The Code; Clinician



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**Michael White**  
Recording Artist; Clinician



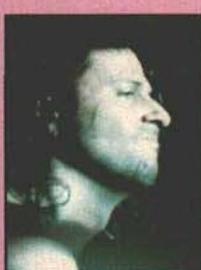
**Mark Zonder**  
Fates Warning



**Bobby Rondinelli**  
Black Sabbath



**Pete Sandoval**  
Morbid Angel



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walked, and I listened to the cadence in their voices when they spoke. That personality I get from being in their presence is what happens when I play something that they do; there's a real love there, not just me playing a lick from a record player.

**BW:** As a kid, I remember listening to Blue Note jazz records on an old record player, not hearing anything but the "bombs" on the bass drum. Years later, I was surprised to discover Billy Higgins playing fours on the bass drum, very quietly. You must have gone through similar realizations seeing these guys live.

**LW:** When I was coming up there was a club down the block from my house in Jamaica, Queens. I was too young to get in, but I would watch Philly Joe Jones through the window, and then I would have to go home and go to sleep to go to school the next morning.

**BW:** Tell me what you saw through the window. Can you paint a picture of Philly Joe or Art Blakey?

**LW:** For most of these guys I can give you a scenario. Let me preempt everything by saying this: One of the questions you may ask me later on—well, we did talk about it before the interview—but you asked if I felt slighted by the lack of attention by the younger guys. Here's my take on all that. The guys I respected the most playing the instrument gave me some public and some personal credibility. They said that they liked the way I played. Those were the masters: *They* said that I could play. That reassures me.

## Forever...And Ever

Here are the albums that Lenny has made—and in some cases (\*) produced—that best represent his playing:

Artist	Title
Lenny White	Present Tense*
Lenny White	Renderers Of Spirit*
Jamaica Boys	Jamaica Boys*
Jamaica Boys	J'Boyz*
Return To Forever	Where Have I Known You Before
Bobby Hutcherson/Ron Carter/Lenny White, etc.	Acoustic Masters II*
Stanley Clarke	Children Of Forever
Gato Barbieri/Bob James/Mike Manieri/	Afro Cubano Chant*
Steve Berries/Andy Gonzales/Lenny White	

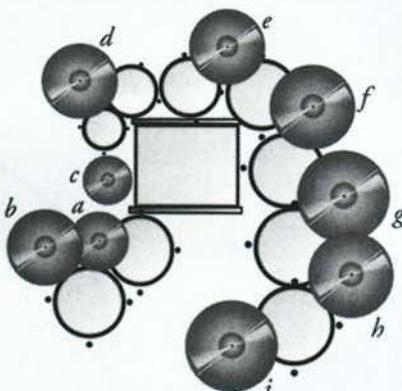
And here are the albums that Lenny draws upon for inspiration:

Artist	Title	Drummer
Miles Davis	Miles Smiles	Tony Williams
Miles Davis	Milestones	Philly Joe Jones
John Coltrane	A Love Supreme	Elvin Jones
Herbie Hancock	Empyrean Isles	Tony Williams
Hank Mobley	No Room For Squares	Philly Joe Jones
James Brown	Star Time	various drummers
Sly & The Family Stone	("The whole box set, every minute of it")	Andy Newmark
Tony Williams Lifetime	Fresh	Tony Williams
	Emergency	

To go on to the scenario, Art Blakey is at the Village Vanguard. I go to the Village Vanguard with Steve Grossman; we used to go around New York as young musicians and terrorize everybody by going in and playing like John Coltrane and Elvin Jones and destroying everybody's session. But this night, Art let me play his drumset, and Steve sat in and played. Philly Joe Jones just happened to be in the Vanguard. I thought that I sounded great, so I went back into the kitchen, and Philly Joe was there and said, "Yeah, Len, you sounded,

uh, *something*." I was crushed! I was kind of depressed. Six months later I played the Vanguard with Freddie Hubbard, and it was burning, but Freddie was complaining to me that I was playing too loud. I went back into the kitchen, and Philly Joe was there. He said, "Yeah, Len *that's* what I'm talking about. You sounded great, man. I used to make Miles' lips bleed! *That's* what you're supposed to do." So I was vindicated.

Roy Haynes used to play with his Hip Ensemble all around town. He played at



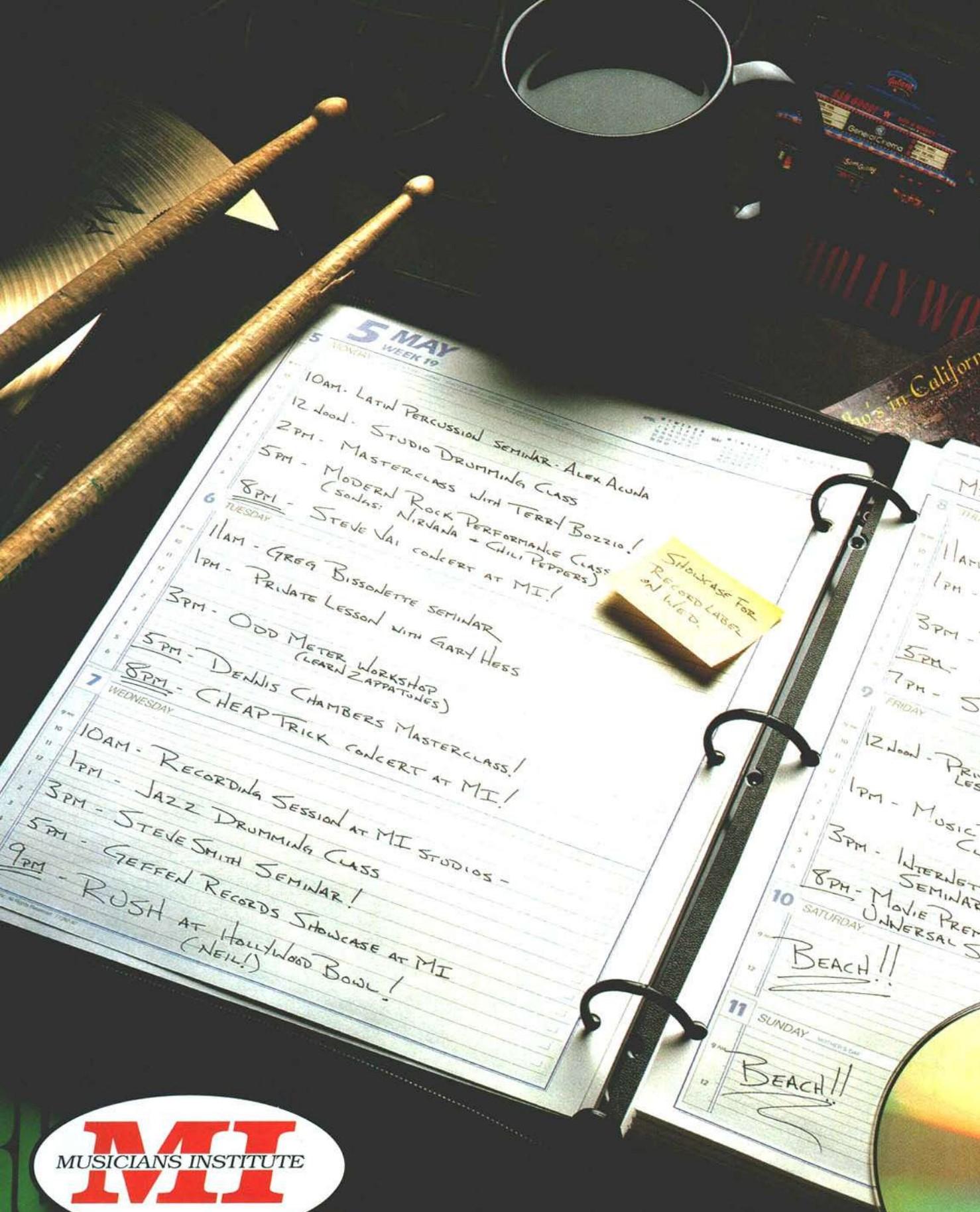
- a) 13" Signature Heavy Hi-Hat
- b) 17" Signature Full Crash
- c) 10" Signature Splash
- d) 16" Signature Full Crash
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- f) 18" Signature Full Ride
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Slugs, and at the end of his set he'd play "The Negro National Anthem" as his theme song to go out. Then he'd take a drum solo, a little drum cadenza. He played the whole set, stopped, and had me come up and play. This is Roy Haynes, you know what I'm saying? You know, I was playing with Jackie McLean when Jack DeJohnette walked in and played melodica while I was playing drums. All these things were significant for me in my formative years.

**BW:** So it was more than just keeping with cool clothes and dark-sounding cymbals. Musicians had to be good, or else.

**LW:** Living in New York and being a young drummer at the time was like the Wild, Wild West, because cats would come in and be gunning for you. You'd play at sessions and you had to have your stuff together or somebody was going to come in and take your gig.

The thing was, Tony Williams played with Jackie McLean, then he went to Miles Davis; Jack DeJohnette played with Jackie McLean, then he went with Miles Davis. So I played with Jackie McLean, and everybody said, "Hey, man, you're going to play with Miles." It was a great time to be a young musician because you had to be on your toes; you had to aspire to be good enough to play with Miles Davis or Horace Silver. The difference nowadays is that there's no apprenticeship. Guys get their feet wet and get some sort of credibility here and there, and then record companies push a record contract in their face. Some of them are not ready for that.



**BW:** When you say you *had* to be good, can you remember any specific instance of someone telling you to improve some area—fast tempos, for example?

**LW:** You know, the first thing Miles asked me when I met him was if I could play fast. Some people play fast, but a real problem with some of today's young drummers is that they don't know how to play a jazz ride. The cymbal beat is the thing that makes everybody dance. If you listen to Art Blakey, Philly Joe, Elvin: They are master *musicians*, not just drummers. If you listen to what Tony was doing with

Miles, like on *Miles Smiles*, Herbie [Hancock] didn't play anything because between Ron Carter and Tony's cymbal beat, what else are you going to play? Art Blakey could drive a band just with his cymbal!

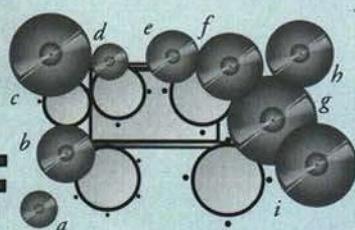
**BW:** You produced Billy Higgins on the *Acoustic Masters* series. How would you describe the difference between, say, Billy's cymbal beat and Art Blakey's?

**LW:** They're somewhat similar, because Art plays in the center of the beat; Elvin has a feel that's a little behind the beat; Tony was a little bit on top of the beat.

# C O P E H A N D

## stewart

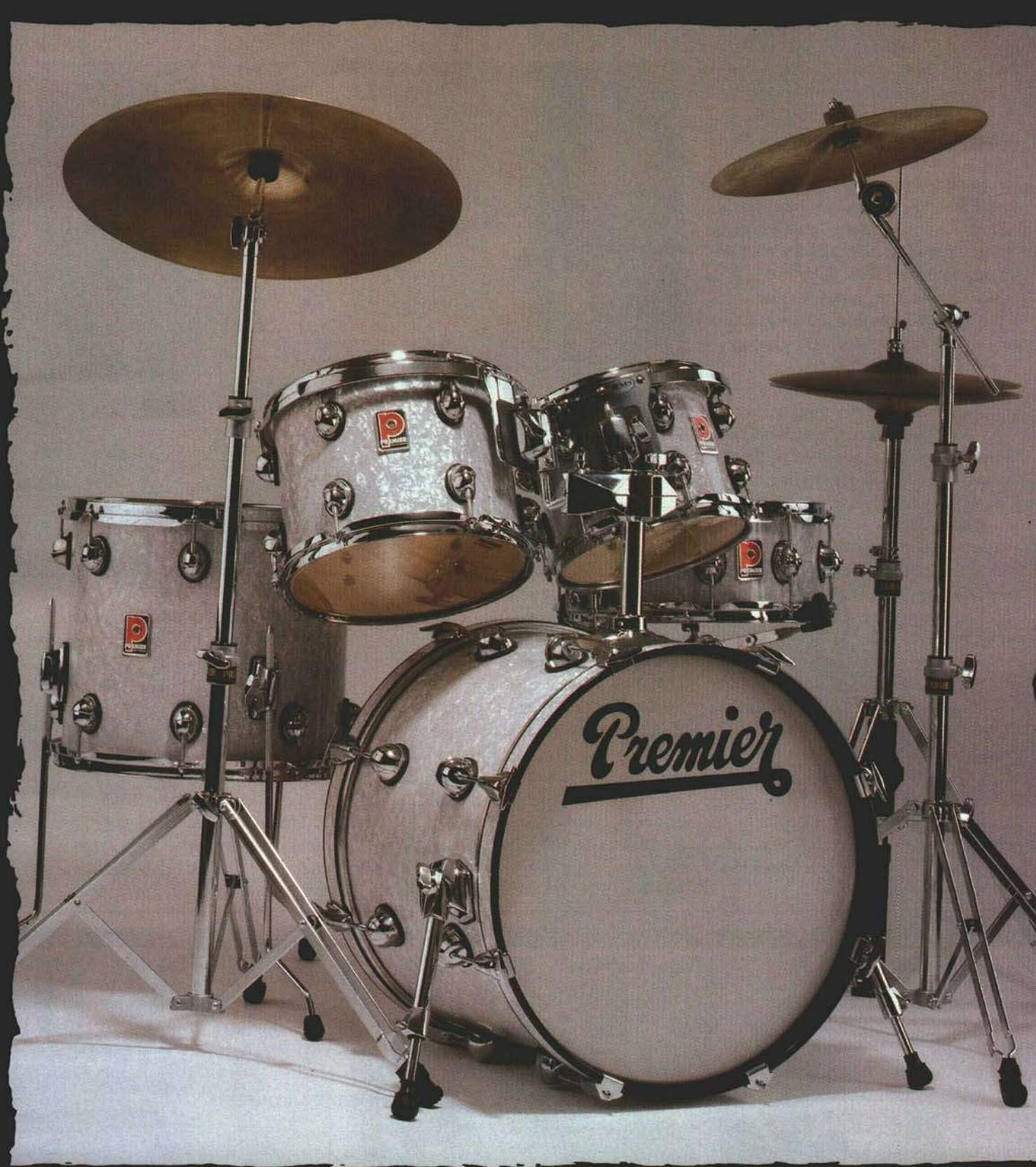
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Art's time was so *centered*; Billy Higgins is like that. He has a "dancey" beat. Listen to the records he did with Lee Morgan—it's swashbuckling!

**BW:** I asked him to tell me about his triplet because it mystified me, and he replied in this low voice, "You got to hang with the cats."

**LW:** Well he's right, you've got to hang with the cats. You really have to speak the language. There's a language in how that music is spaced, and that's the difference in how some of the young drummers today listen to those records and decipher what Tony Williams was doing. They get part of what he did, but they don't get *all* of it: Spacing is how you play what you play *in the context of the music*.

**BW:** Bobby Sanabria claims that if you want to play Latin music, you have to learn the vocabulary, starting with the most basic of phrases.

**LW:** Right. I did a week with Danilo Perez at Sweet Basil. Danilo did an album of Monk music but with a Latin edge. They had this music down, and it was a joy to play. Two interesting things happened: Billy Hart came into the club and said, "Man, you really understand that language. You sound authentic." And another friend of mine came in, a Puerto Rican guy, and said I was one of the only guys who could play the right spacing around the clave. I guess I was around the guys enough to learn the language.

**BW:** You feel you were around them enough to get the language down com-

pletely?

**LW:** I was around Francisco Aguabella, Armando Peraza, Pete and Coke Escovedo. I sat with them and saw the cadence of how they talked, "Hey, my man, da dah, da dah." And I listened to a lot of Latin music, like Eddie Palmieri. I'm not saying that right now I'm going to go out and give a dissertation on Latin music, but I try to play as authentically as I can in any style of music. Thing is, if it doesn't swing, forget it.

**BW:** The first time I heard you in the early '70s, I heard a looseness, you know, as if comparing Art Blakey and Joe Morello, which I preferred in your playing over the other fusion exponents.

**LW:** It's really interesting that you say that. I was playing recently with Geri Allen, and Wallace [Roney] would come and sit in, and one time he said, "I'd like you to come out and do some dates with me, because you're the only other guy who knows this language. Tony and Jack know this language; you're the only other guy that knows it." I said, "No, Wally, I...." And he said, "No, I've been a fan of yours for a long time." It's very hard for me to deal with someone being a fan; I just play the drums. Of course, there's a certain part of me that gets afraid when I don't see my name in public as much as I'd like to. I don't really care that much, because I enjoy what I'm doing. It's a blessing to be able to just play. When I can't do that, then you probably will hear me vocalizing a little more—if I don't get the opportunities to

play what I want to play.

**BW:** Your productions are distinguished by their clarity. The '70s was really hard on drummers. In fact, I'm quoting you talking to *Down Beat*: "Jazz records on the whole, I think, are not recorded well at all. There are a few that are, but for the most part they are not. How can you appreciate good music when you can't hear what's going on?" [From the March 1974 issue of *Down Beat*.] I think maybe you solved that problem.

**LW:** The way you rectify a problem is to take control of a certain area. If you're capable of doing something and are given the opportunity to do that, then you can change it.

I was trying to do a solo project, *Present Tense*, and Sylvia Rhone came to me saying she wanted to start getting Atlantic's jazz catalog back together. At the same time, I wanted to do this fusion project under my own name. We talked about both, and she suggested that I put together an all-star record. There's a friend of mine who put together a performance for New Year's Eve back in 1992 out at Yoshi's, but they couldn't get it together in time to record it. So we came back and did it with Bobby Hutcherson, Craig Handy, Ron Carter, Mulgrew Miller, Gerry Gonzales, and me. We did another one with Charles Lloyd.

**BW:** Was that the first straight-ahead material you produced?

**LW:** No. I did a series of records for Elektra Musician called *Echoes Of An Era*,

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which included Chaka Khan, Chick Corea, Freddie Hubbard, Joe Henderson, Stanley Clarke, and me. And we did one without Chaka, an instrumental record called the *Griffith Park Collection*. That summer, which was 1981, Chaka was nominated for a Grammy as jazz vocalist, and *Stereo Review* gave the album five stars. Those were the first straight-ahead projects where I had started to flex and do something.

**BW:** I know you've recorded with [legendary jazz engineer] Rudy Van Gelder behind the board. Seems to me you're getting similar results.

**LW:** That's the sound I grew up with and have tried to strive for. Jazz is ambient music; it's not like pop music where you want to hear the bass drum *here* with dead tom-toms so that you can hear the vocal. Jazz music is not like that. It is alive, it's performance music. It's ambient, and Rudy's sound was ambient: It was breadth, width, and depth. I'm not saying that's not the case with all pop music, but jazz has *life* and a classic sound. From that aspect, this is classical music, and I'm trying to stay within the realm of classical music and classical interpretation.

**BW:** On the studio floor, are you going about it the same way as Van Gelder? I talked to [legendary producer] Tom Dowd, and he was adamant about miking techniques, choice of rooms, and spontaneity.

**LW:** Yeah, I recorded with Tom. I'd sit and watch how these guys would mike things. You have to understand, Rudy made all those classic Blue Note and Impulse recordings. He's a master at that. If I'm copying him—and I don't think I'm at that level—fine.

**BW:** Let's take *Organic Grooves*, the organ album with you and Idris Muhammad. How did you decide where the drums would be placed in the room and what mic's to use?

**LW:** [laughs] Hey, I'm not going to tell you my secrets!

**BW:** Are you fastidious about what you carry to a session? For example, do you hoard all the old condenser and ribbon mic's you can find?

**LW:** You said a key word: "ribbon mic." That's what makes the sound of those cymbals. I read about that seven or eight years ago, and it stuck with me.

**BW:** You play on a lot of your productions; is your own cymbal sound a result of miking, or is it the choice of cymbal?

**LW:** Well, both, and it's the same cymbal, too.

**BW:** You're telling me that it's the same cymbal on "Luna Tune" [from *Organic Grooves*] as on *Essence Of Funk* and *Renderers Of Spirit*? What is it?

**LW:** It's a 22" jf Zildjian that has rivets. It's an older American K. I've gotten a lot of compliments on it.

**BW:** What are you hearing in that cymbal? There's an overtone—is that a Tony thing?

**LW:** Yeah, and Art Blakey and Elvin. The thing about it is that the first time I ever heard K Zildjian cymbals—you listen to Trane's *A Love Supreme* or Miles' *Nefertiti*—I love all that stuff, and I tried to find a cymbal that sounded something like that. It's a medium weight. I used to break cymbals; they used to crack due to the sound levels we used to play at. When I played fusion I went to As and used plastic-tip sticks, because the music was really loud. The point is that I've gotten to where I can use Ks and I don't have a problem. I think I understand the instrument a lot

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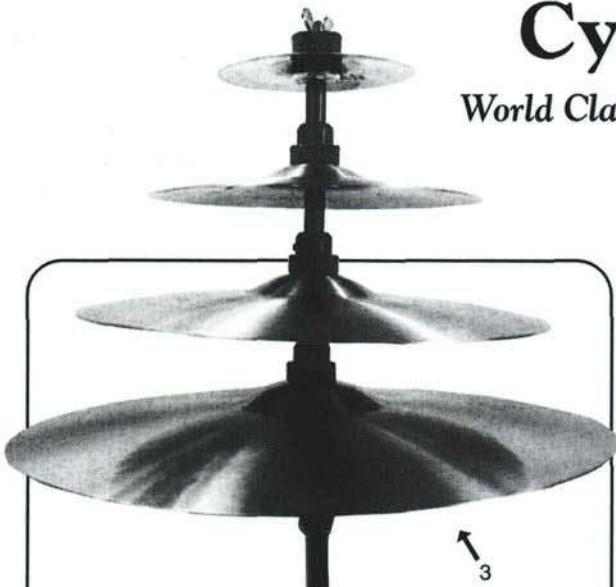


# 2000



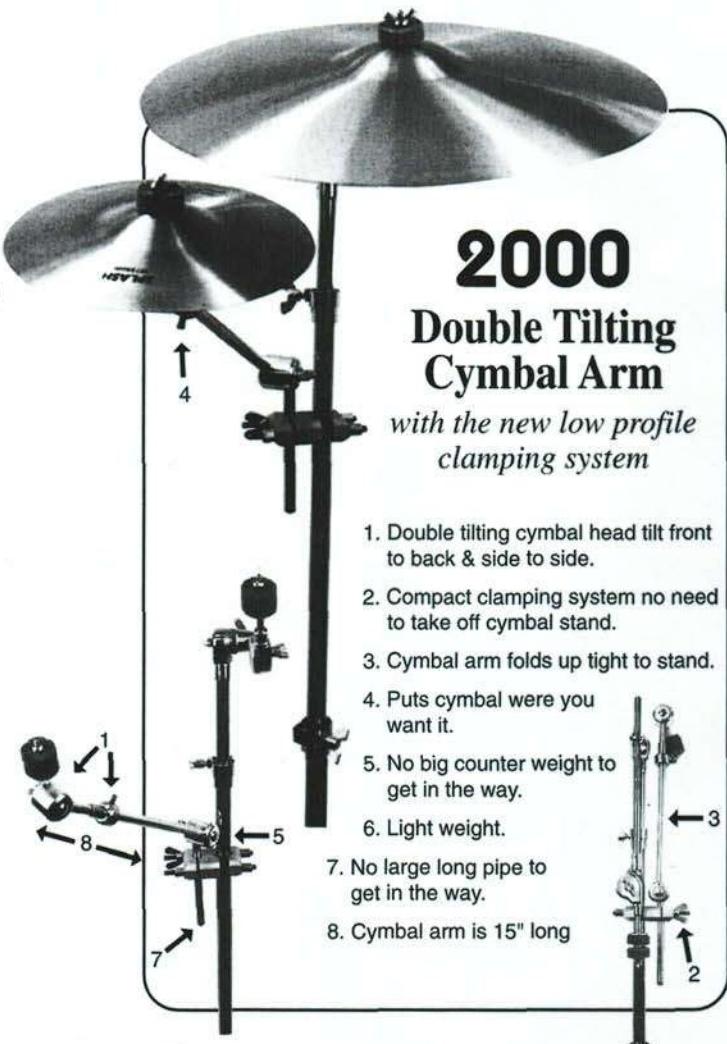
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more. When I was younger it was just brute force; it was athleticism.

**BW:** You're still playing the ride on the left-hand side. That must pose a problem sitting in on somebody else's drums, although I guess it's the same kit with the ride reversed.

**LW:** Yeah, it's the same kit, but you've got to adjust and play *across* your body sometimes. I play left-handed and right-footed.

**BW:** Getting back to producing, I'm going to make an assumption that you're a per-

fectionist. Drummers gravitate to producing to ensure that the job gets done right.

**LW:** One of the reasons I got into producing jazz records was because I was tired of old guys sitting behind the board coming in and telling jazz musicians what they should do—why they should do another take. I don't think anybody understands music better than a working musician who is physically in the clubs every night playing this music.

**BW:** When you are writing most of the tunes and playing on your own produc-

tions, do you have to make hard decisions about living with little bits you might want to redo?

**LW:** Oh yes. This record, *Renderers Of Spirit*, was a lot harder than my last, *Present Tense*. I was out playing a lot during the making of the new one, and I had a deadline. There were things from the instrumental standpoint I would have done again. If everybody else is sounding good, that's fine; it's okay if I don't sound that good. It is my record, but I had to go with that.

**BW:** I put the CD in my machine and the bass drum comes down with that "point" to the sound, and I'm thinking, "Oh, no, this is going to be hi-tech elevator music," but then, sixteen bars into it, I'm hearing musicians stretching out. Even in the title tune, the way the ride is mixed frees up the melodic line: Had you played on the hats throughout it would have had such a "sequenced" feeling. It all *breathes*.

**LW:** That's the music I grew up with; music has gotten away from all that sequenced thing. Do you remember when you grew up and there was a record you just had to have? The album had a whole lot of different things on it, and a diverse clientele bought it. Take an album like *Aja*, a fantastic Steely Dan record: I know jazz musicians and R&B and opera lovers who bought it. That doesn't happen anymore.

Now what you get is isolated and defined markets. Record companies get the artists to play a certain kind of thing and stick with that. I'm trying to bring it back to where you buy an album and you can play it for your jazz or fusion friends.

**BW:** Who would have thought to include Christopher Cross'"Sailing"?

**LW:** Listen, man, I love music; I'm a musician. The jazzers don't want to call me a jazz musician, and "fusion guy" is such a bad term now. But I play a lot of different kinds of music. When you ask someone who has lived through a lot of experiences, they speak to you from the perspective of having knowledge about these things. They sound like learned people. I don't understand when the concept came about that it's better to be well-versed in one thing than to be learned about all of them. I don't understand why that changed. You know, Roy Haynes played with everybody—come on!

**BW:** I really like the use of the organ on the new album's title track, and the sound

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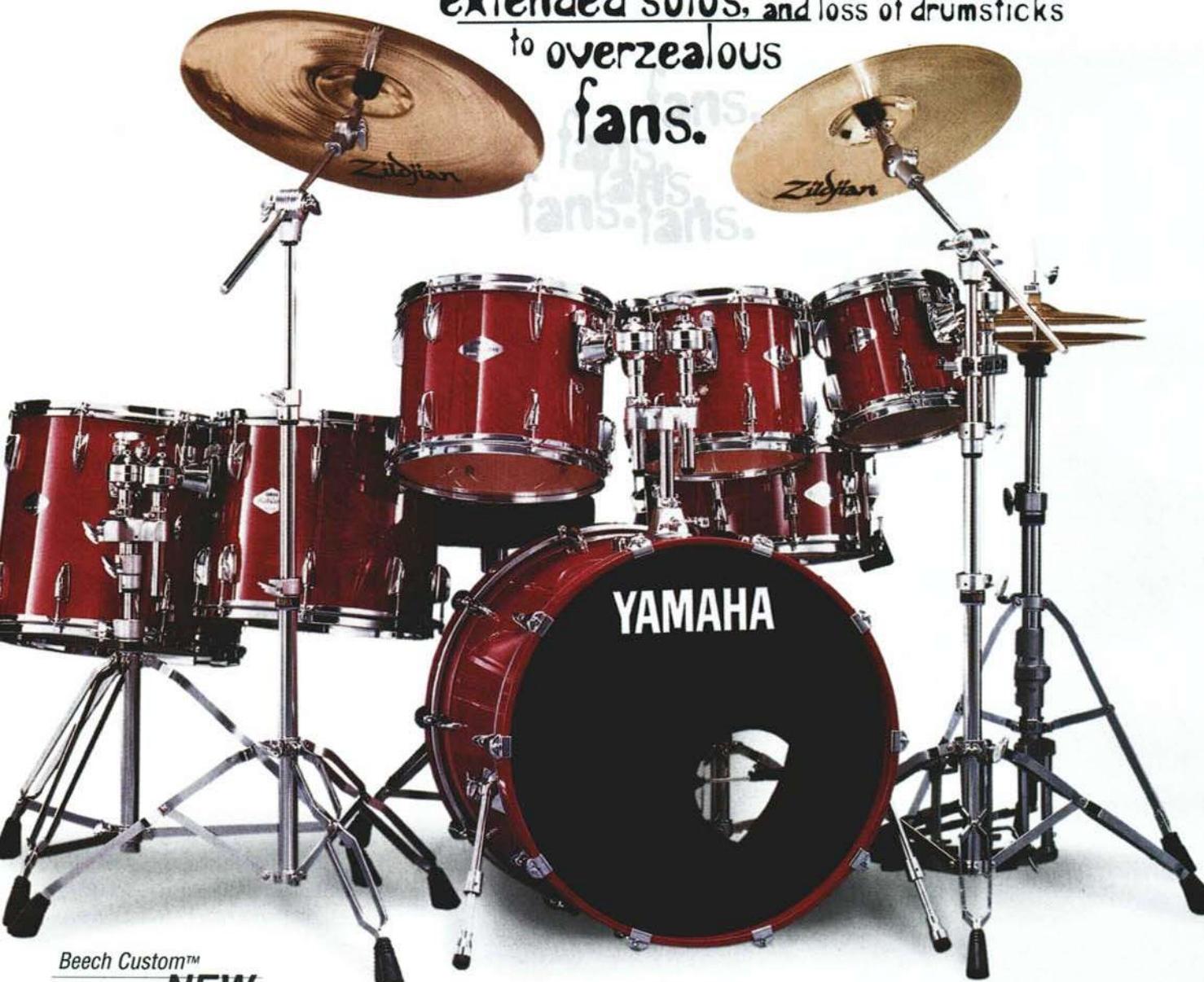
A black and white photograph of Carter Beauford, a member of the Dave Matthews Band, smiling. He is wearing a small American flag pin on his lapel. To his right is a large, handwritten-style inscription that reads: "Congratulations to 40 years of establishing the Pro-Mark of Excellence." Below this inscription is a signature that appears to be "Carter Beauford". Underneath the signature, the text "Carter Beauford" and "Dave Matthews Band" is printed. At the bottom of the image is a large, stylized logo for "pro-mark" in red and blue. The logo includes the text "40TH ANNIVERSARY" and "1957-1997 DRUMSTICKS". A hand holding a red drumstick is partially visible on the right side of the logo.

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**LW:** That's partly my *Starclassic* drums; I'm the longest endorser that Tama has had. I've been with them since 1976.

**BW:** Was it hard for a jazz lover to give up "that great Gretsch sound"?

**LW:** These *Starclassics* are the closest thing to that old Gretsch sound; they have the die-cast hoops and the thin shells. That's the Gretsch sound! These *Starclassics* help me retool and reinvent my sound. It depends on how you tune

them, also. I use clear heads. The classic jazz sound is the sound of coated heads, but I get a little more stick articulation with the clear heads.

**BW:** The song "Swingtime" (from *Renderers Of Spirit*) has a neat idea—the four-on-the-floor on the bass drum.

**LW:** I wanted to go back to the swing vibe, but from a '90s point of view. Recording-wise, it has a little more distant miking to get a more ambient sound. That was in a big room. The sound of those records with Gene Krupa and Baby Dodds

was much more of an ambient sound. I wanted to re-create that. The tune was based on that four-on-the-floor. People think, "four-on-the-floor equals disco," but before disco, swing music was the dance music of the time with the bass drum on all four. The dance music of the '30s and '40s was the feel I wanted to get.

**BW:** Besides all of the recorded projects you've been doing recently, I understand you have a book project in the works.

**LW:** I've written a drum book with a friend of mine who is a fine drummer and educator, Frank Marino. We've worked on it over the last couple of years. It's a whole method for drumming, and we talk about players, rhythmic concepts, and a lot of other topics. I'd like people to watch for it.

**BW:** You've had some amazing experiences in your career, but one of the most important must have been recording Miles Davis's landmark album, *Bitches Brew*. Can you describe the sessions?

**LW:** It was a dream come true. A lot of people don't get to meet their idols; I got to meet mine and play with him. That record was done in August of 1969, and it literally took about three months for the experience to sink in. I woke up in the middle of the night—"Wow, I recorded with Miles Davis!" It was history, it was documented. It was so special.

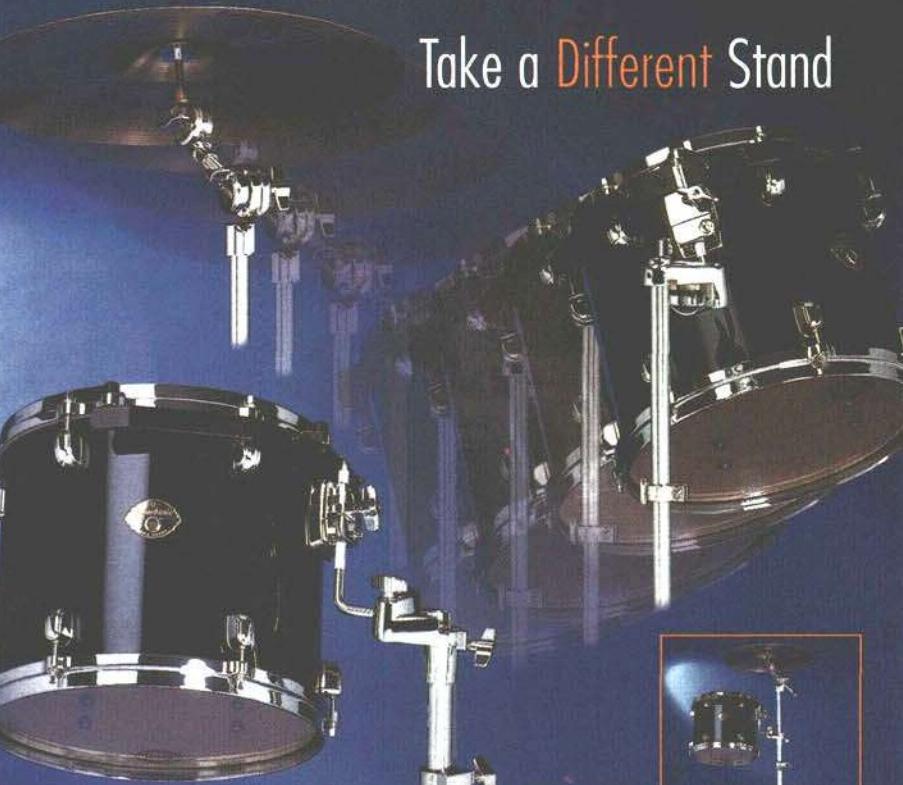
**BW:** And that music continues to influence generation after generation.

**LW:** It was a whole new movement of music. To be perfectly honest, somebody who does not get the credit is Tony Williams, because his group, Lifetime, was the first group to do that kind of music. As drummers we were amazed at what Tony was doing with Lifetime, and we were all checking it out.

**BW:** Back to *Bitches Brew*, what was it like to record with that crew?

**LW:** I'll tell you what happened. I got a call to come to Miles' house for a rehearsal. It was Chick, Jack DeJohnette, Wayne Shorter, and Dave Holland. Both Jack and I only had a cymbal and a snare drum. Miles was upstairs. All we rehearsed was the beginning of "Bitches Brew." We rehearsed that for about an hour and a half, and then Miles said to be at the studio at 10:00. I was there at 9:00—I was so early that the cleaning lady had to let me in! I'm the first one there and I'm in awe: It's my very first recording date. I set up my drums

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and started practicing. Miles gets on the intercom and says, "Jaaack!" "Yeah, Miles?" "Tell that young drummer to shut up!" I was petrified, man. But he was great.

Jack and I were in the same room, but we had a baffle between us. Juma Santos and Don Alias did percussion and had baffles between them, too, but we were all in a circle. Miles was in the middle at a podium. We'd start up the groove and play for a while, and Miles would point to Wayne, and Wayne would take a solo, and then he'd stop us. And we'd start up the groove again, and he'd point to John McLaughlin, and he would solo, and then we'd stop. When I listened back to it, it was all spliced together.

Something else I remember was the bass drum I used on that session. I had a gas-line-can bass drum—a metal bass drum! A friend of Steve Grossman and Elvin made a drum out of an oil drum. He sanded the edges and put lugs and a mount on it. Elvin wanted to buy that drum, but I got it.

When I got called to do my next record, Freddie Hubbard's *Red Clay*, Freddie called me—he's another idol of mine—and I asked, "Who's on the date?" "It's Herbie Hancock, Ron Carter, Joe Henderson. I

calmly replied, "Oh, really?" Inside I was screaming, "Aaaaahhh!"

So I went to the studio, Rudy Van Gelder's studio—hallowed ground, you understand. This is the same place *Empyrean Isles* and *A Love Supreme* were made. Rudy asked me to hit the bass drum. "Doom!" Real resonant sound, right? Ron Carter says, "Uh, no, we ain't gonna play with that bass drum." So they brought out this huge—must have been a 28"—bass drum. It had a painting on the front head—a moonlit lake with mountains—and I had to play that drum. I hated it!

**BW:** You're trying to tell me they thought that bass drum sounded better than your gasoline drum?

**LW:** When you listen to all those records, that was the sound. Deaden the drums.

**BW:** But it wasn't a straight-ahead album anyway.

**LW:** No. And for the tune "Red Clay" I took a welcome mat that was outside the door and put it on the snare drum. If you listen, that sounds different than any of the other tunes. I put the mat on the snare to deaden it.

**BW:** I'm shocked. In the same breath

we're talking about Rudy Van Gelder and those classic albums, and yet he's going along with all these weird mufflings.

**LW:** Well, they wanted a certain sound; Creed Taylor was producing. You listen to all those CTI records, and they had a certain sound. Rudy still used whatever technique, but they sounded completely different from the Blue Note records. It was the '70s, man!

**BW:** It's nice that snare drums are returning to normal.

**LW:** I'm into making drums sound like drums. I want the drums to sing.



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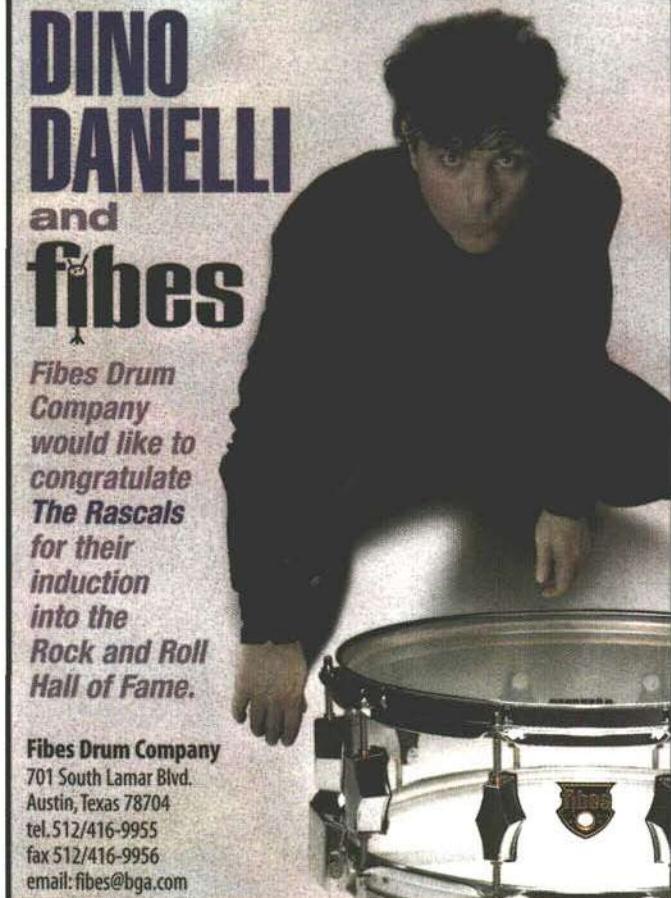
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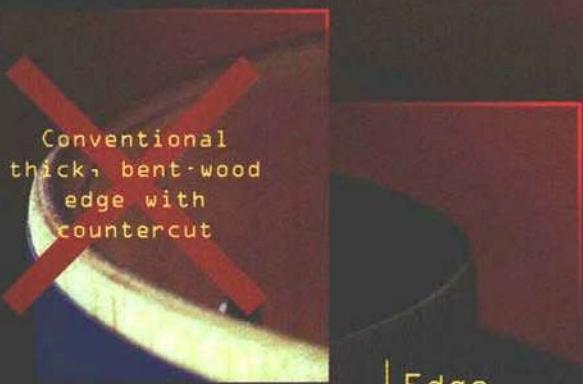
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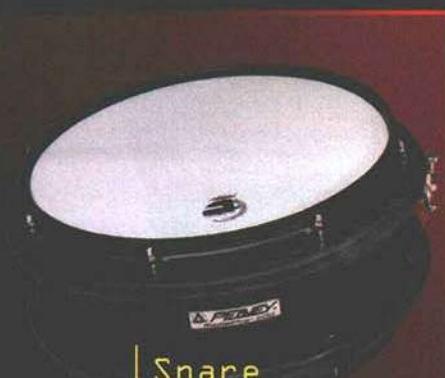
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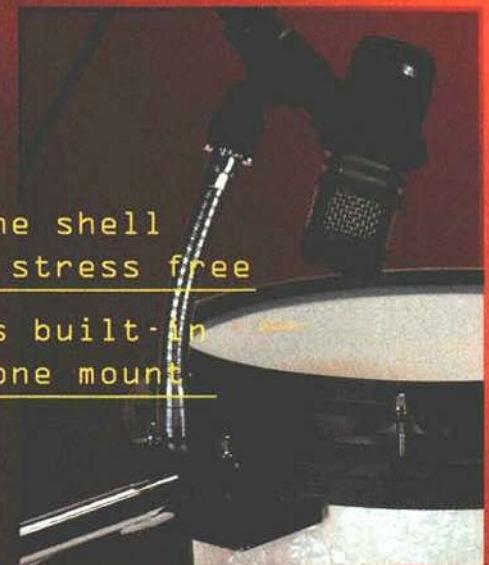
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PEAVEY

# No Doubt's Adrian Young





**A**drian Young thought he was about to lose his job as No Doubt's drummer. It was nearmg the end of 1991, and the other members of the band had decided it was time to make a record. No Doubt was still unsigned, but they had put together a two-song demo the year before that was produced by the Chili Peppers' Flea. It was Adrian's first recording experience, and it didn't go well.

"I wasn't grooving. I was nervous and shaky," recalls Adrian. "I was this inexperienced kid, and Flea was trying to help me get into it. I was choking and thinking, 'Oh God, I'm ruining it for everybody.' I felt really bad. We eventually got it, but it took a long time. And what was ironic was that we never used those tracks for anything."

But during the band meeting regarding the album they were going to make, one of the bandmembers flat out said, "I don't think Adrian is ready." "I got really bummed out and upset," the drummer remembers. "I had to go outside because I was crying. I came back and told the band, 'You don't need to be held back by me, so either record with me now or I'll let you guys move on!'"

Adrian had only been playing drums for a year and a half when he joined No Doubt. He had hoped to become a professional golfer, but when he got into Long Beach State, the golf team was too tough, so he opted for a psychology major. For Christmas of his eighteenth year he asked his parents for a drumset, and he began to play—just for fun. "My dad said, 'Now don't run off and join a band,'" Adrian recalls with a laugh. "And I said, 'Yeah, right!' never thinking I would."

Young played along to Rush, Heart, Fishbone, the Police, and even some No Doubt demos he owned (Adrian was a big fan of the local Orange County band before he joined them). Adrian even played in a local heavy metal band. There he was, on a stage with thirty-year-olds in tight snakeskin pants!

Six months later the drum spot in No Doubt opened up, and their roadie, knowing Adrian was a fan, called him to audition. The group had been together longer than Adrian had been playing drums, but the young drummer didn't let that sway him, and he began seriously practicing to their demo. Sure enough, Adrian got the gig. Problem was, he had learned the parts directly from the tape—he could play them backwards and forwards—but beyond that, his drumming knowledge was limited.

Adrian spent the next couple of years trying to catch up to the musicianship of the other band members. He borrowed bass player Tony Kanal's metronome, and in addition to Thursday and Sunday group rehearsals, Adrian practiced constantly on his own. He focused his approach around bands like Fishbone and the Police, from whom No Doubt had derived a great deal of influence.

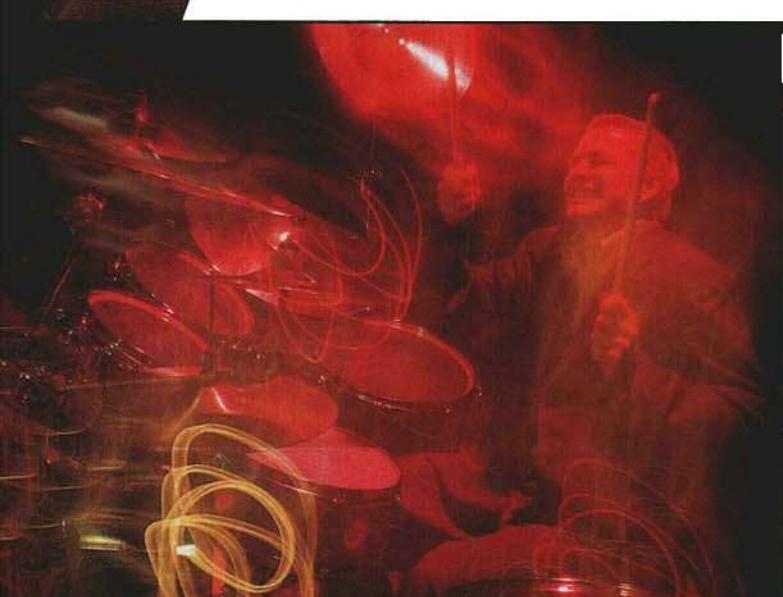
Adrian does admit to taking one drum lesson in 1990. The fact that he really couldn't afford to keep up with lessons, though, probably accounts for his unconventional approach. But it's that approach that the band was unwilling to part with upon his proposal during that first album discussion. They didn't let him go, they recorded the first album, and he rose to the occasion.

Interscope records became interested in No Doubt because of that first effort, although the band convinced the label to allow them to record a new version of the album. Though that first record didn't do well commercially, the company gave the go-ahead for a second.

The sessions for the next record began in 1993, which was followed by a period in the band's history that can only be described as chaotic. When *Tragic Kingdom* was initially released, Interscope did very little to support it. During this frustrating period, money grew tight for Adrian, and he moved back in with his father and stepmother. When his laziness subsided, he went back to waiting tables. Then longtime member Eric Stefani quit the group. And if things weren't tough enough, it was during this time that lead singer Gwen Stefani (Eric's little sister) and bass player Tony Kanal broke off their relationship. Yes, there was some doubt about this band's future.

by Robyn Flans

photos by Alex Solca



**Not "Just a Drummer"**

**RF:** Was there ever a discussion about breaking up during that difficult period?

**AY:** After our first record didn't hit commercially, we started writing songs for the second one as soon as we finished the first tour. Then we couldn't get the second record out, because we couldn't convince the label that we had the material. So Eric quit and then Tony and Gwen broke up. Yeah, there was talk about quitting, but I never talked about it. I didn't want to stop.

**RF:** With your lead singer and bass player publicly breaking up, is it tough for a musician to go on stage with that kind of tension every night?

**AY:** I don't know how it's affected me musically, but Tom, the guitar player, and I have observed a lot of emotional struggles. It's hard to watch your friends go through that stuff. It does wear on you, but somehow we've all pulled through it.

**RF:** Is it true what some people say, that you can go on stage and leave everything behind?

**AY:** I don't know if you can leave that kind of stuff behind. It depends on the person, I guess. Sometimes when I'm playing I'm only thinking about the music, but other times I'll be thinking about weird stuff. The only time I really

I've seen rehearsals where everyone in the band was fighting and they were all good musicians. 'You missed the second-to-last note on the third verse! Come on, man, this rock'n'roll, not the New York Philharmonic.'

leave my problems behind is when I golf. Golf doesn't allow me to focus on anything else.

**RF:** Could it be that golf is something you have to think about intensely all the time, but drumming eventually becomes second-nature?

**AY:** Yes, but there was a time when I had to think about every single part I played.

**RF:** When do you think you turned that corner?

**AY:** The first time I noticed it was when someone else pointed it out to me. We

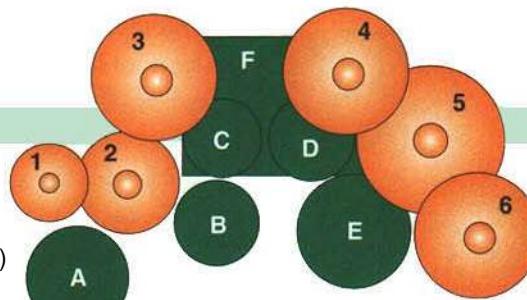
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- D. 10 x 12 tom
- E. 14 x 16 floor tom
- F. 18 x 22 bass drum

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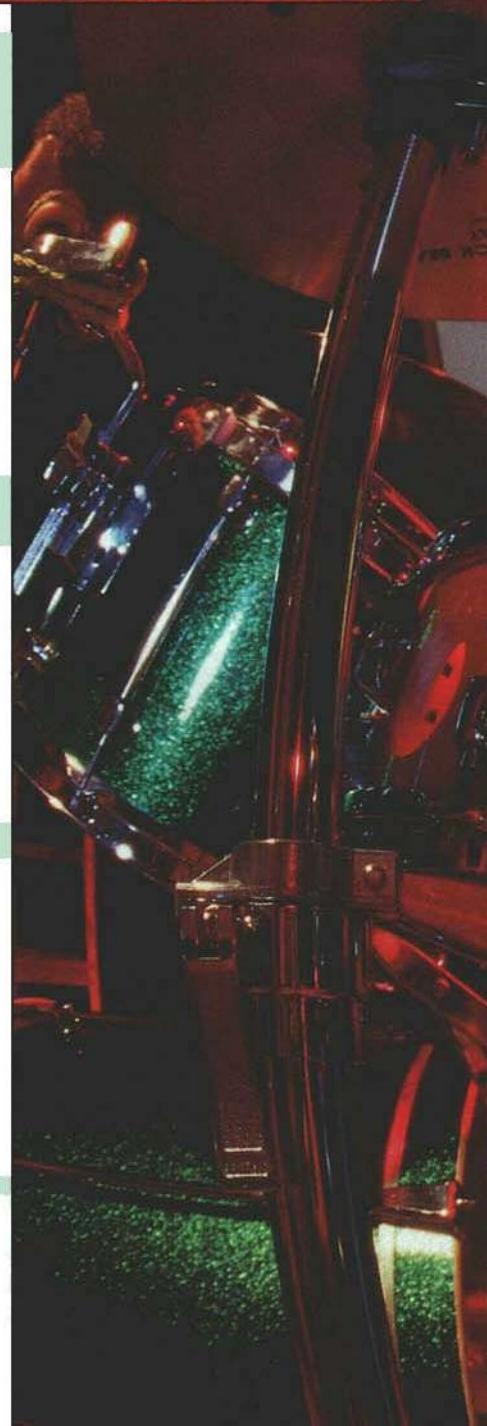
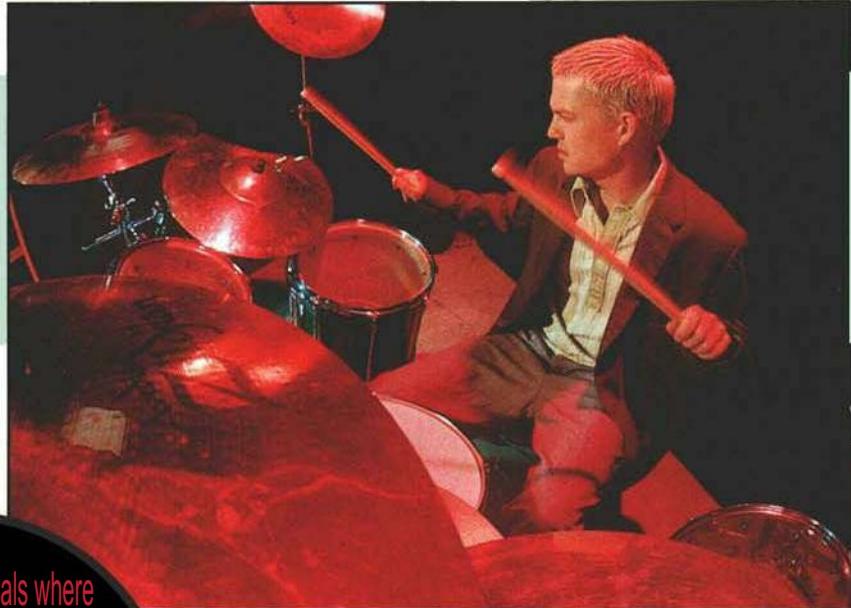
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**Heads:** Remo coated Emperor on snare, clear Emperors on tops of toms and timbale, clear Ambassadors on tom bottoms, clear Emperor on kick batter with Ebony logo on front

**Sticks:** Zildjian Super 5A with nylon tip



were playing a show when some guy standing next to the edge of the stage started talking to me. After the concert, he said, "I can't believe you were playing and having a conversation with me." That was when I realized I could do other things while I drummed, which was probably around 1993. Other drummers will probably read that and go, "So what? He can talk while he's playing," but it was a big change for me.

**RF:** What finally convinced the record company to release the second album?

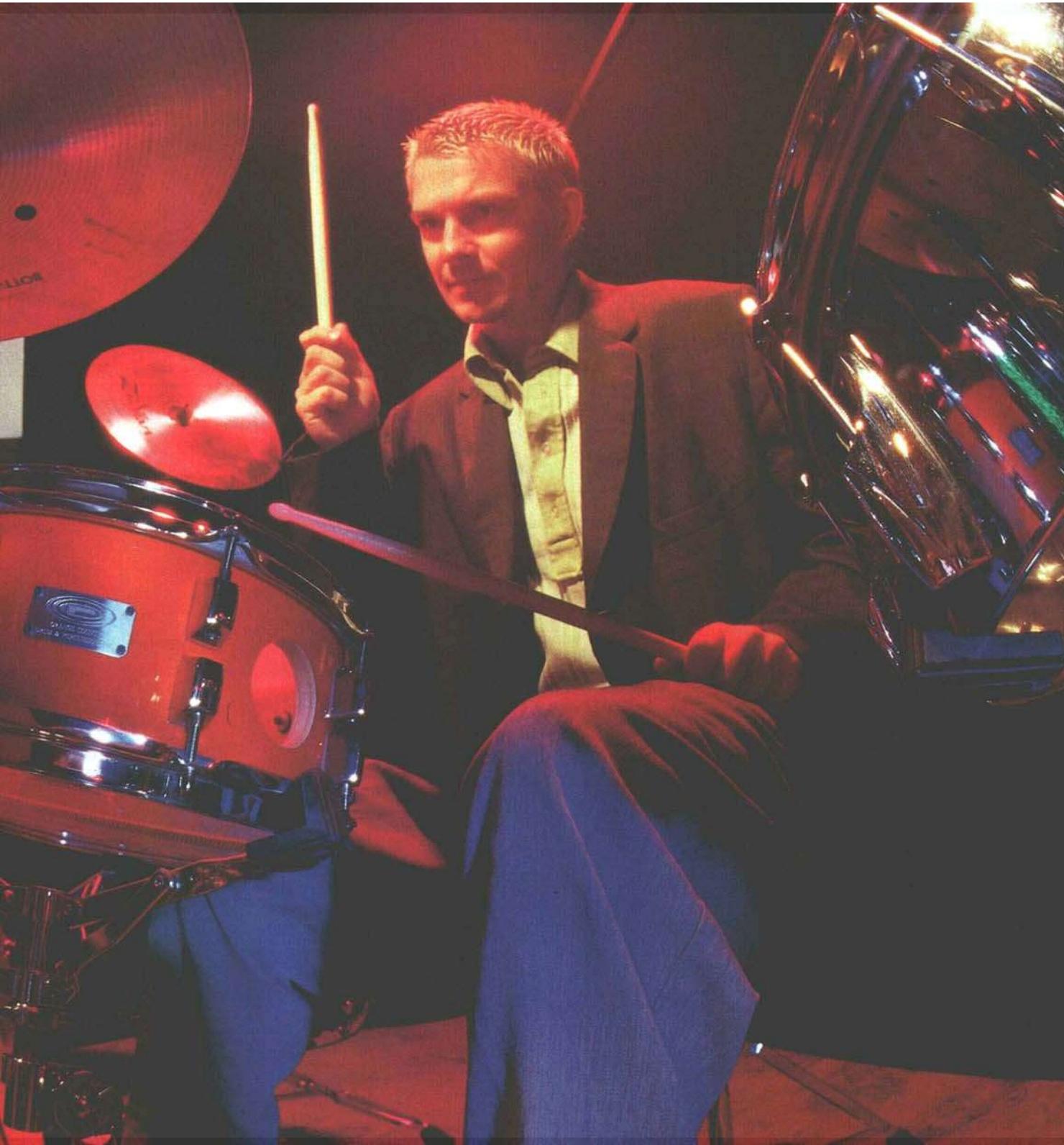
**AY:** I'm not sure. We recorded in eleven different studios over a period of two and a half years, and eventually it was completed. The first sessions for this album were in March of 1993!

**RF:** What about the second project you guys did on your own, *Beacon Street*?

**AY:** We built a studio in our garage and spent months in there writing and mak-

ing demos on a sixteen-track board. In 1995, after two years of practically living out of that garage, we felt we really wanted to put something out. We had a very loyal following—in California especially—who had not heard a new record from us in a couple of years.

So we took a few recordings we had made in that garage, plus some tracks we had recorded at an inexpensive studio by ourselves, and put together our



own record. A month later, we had boxes of CDs, and we just started selling them. By the way, that's not something you're supposed to do when you're signed to a label, but Interscope was cool about it. They understood; they were the reason for the delay. So that's why the *Beacon Street* collection doesn't sound like a fully produced record.

**RF:** When No Doubt began in 1987, the music was different from the way it is now.

**AY:** I think the big misconception is that No Doubt stopped being a ska band a year ago, when in fact even before I joined, the band was experimenting with other things. Ska is really only a part of what we do.

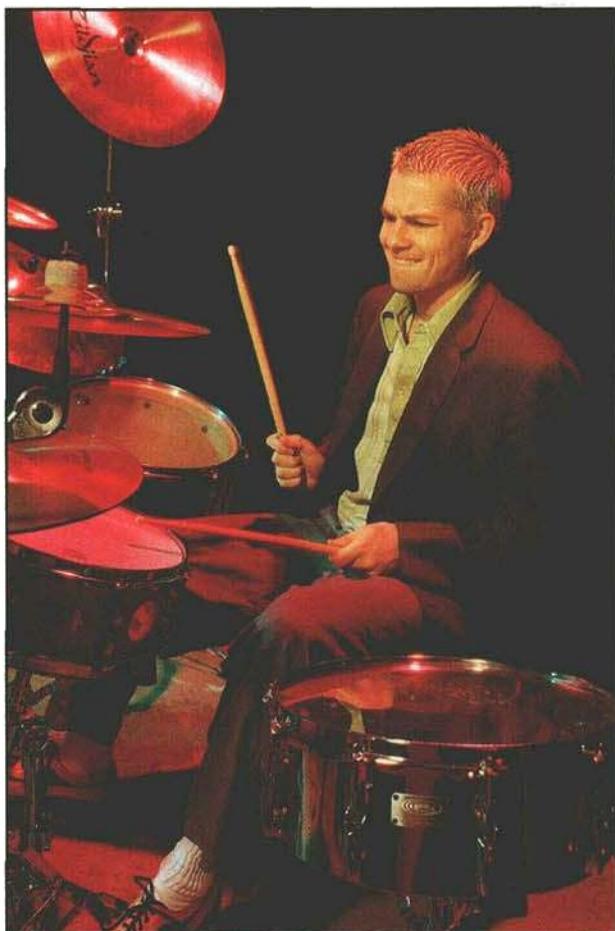
**RF:** The first album was more horn-oriented. As the band progressed you got away from that. Did this affect the way you played in the band?

**AY:** I think it simplified things a little more and made me more rock-oriented. We used to do some weird stuff that caused me to experiment more. After Eric left there were fewer horns and keyboards in the band, and the songs became a little more straightforward as well. I think it was the age, too, because we were all getting a lit-

tle older. In the early days, every song had a meter change—we used to experiment with all sorts of things. I do hope to bring back more horns on the next record.

**RF:** What would you recommend to drummers who want to get inside ska?

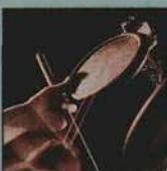
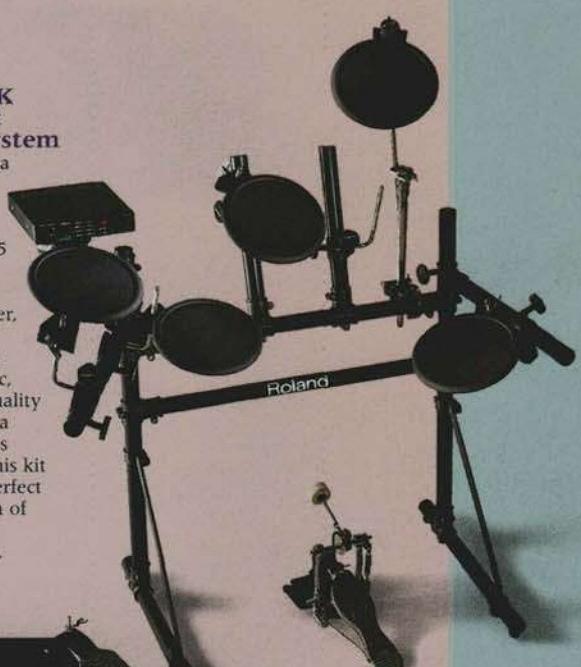
**AY:** I'd recommend going back and practicing to the ska bands from the '60s all the way up to the '90s. Pick up old Bob Marley & the Wailers albums and listen to what those guys were originally doing—those great beats. The recordings sound a little primitive, but they're amazing. I'd also say you should concentrate on the Specials, because their drummer, John Bradbury, is a great ska player. Then listen to Stewart Copeland, who integrated rock with ska and reggae probably



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**RF:** Are there any particular drummers who have become important to you in the last few years?

**AY:** I still enjoy playing along to recordings of other bands, and recently I've been playing along to Steely Dan, Chicago, and Earth, Wind & Fire. One drummer who became really important to me, and a guy who has become a good friend, is Chad Sexton of 311. I think he's bringing something totally new to alternative rock, because he's such a great marching drummer. He's so precise and educated, but at the same time he doesn't sound stiff—he grooves. He integrates that kind of dancehall and swing ska with technique. We're both interested in that kind of drumming, but when I first started hearing him he was doing it better than me and just about anyone else.

**RF:** You just mentioned that some drummers—and bands—play in a stiff manner. How do you learn to play in a loose but confident way?

**AY:** Whatever group of people you get with, you have to jam together for hours until you fit like a glove. You have to keep

playing together, exploring new areas, and not focus on things like, "You hit that bad chord right there," or "Your fill is a little bit weak on that." Just let people go. I've seen rehearsals where everyone in the band was fighting, and they were all good musicians. "You missed the second-to-last note on the third verse!" Come on, man, this is rock 'n' roll, not the New York Philharmonic. It's supposed to make you feel good.

**RF:** How does No Doubt go about putting music together?

**AY:** There are so many different ways a song is written. When Eric Stefani was in the band, especially in the early years, he had the capability of writing a complete song—bass, guitar, drum parts on a drum machine—the whole thing orchestrated with lyrics and melody.

**RF:** How did you feel about that? It sounds like that doesn't leave a lot of room for contribution.

**AY:** I didn't mind it because the parts were so great. I'm not one of those people who feels, "I'm an artist and I need my two cents." But with more experience, from being in the band for a while, I started to

come up with my own parts. I changed a lot of his original ideas, some of which he liked and some of which I'm sure he didn't.

**RF:** But who had final say?

**AY:** There is no final say in this band, and there never has been. If it's your own part, ultimately you're the one who is going to be playing it. Everyone tries to compromise and understand, but at some point you've got to play what you want to play.

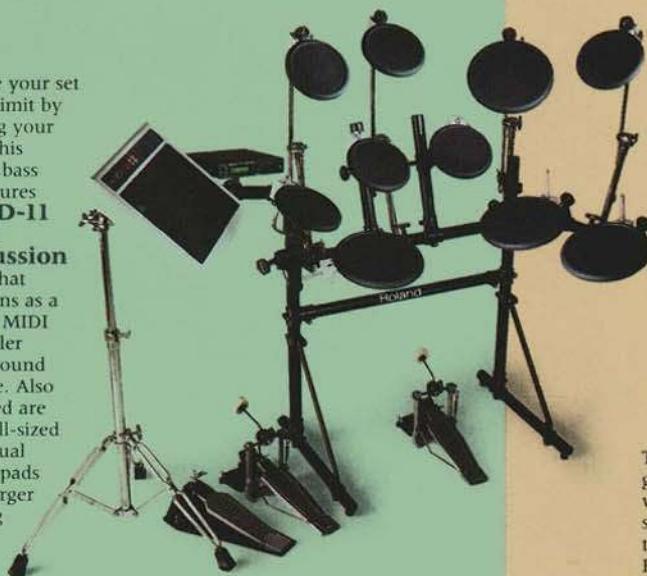
**RF:** Tom Dumont, the band's guitar player, said in a *Guitar World* interview that his idea for "Just A Girl" was to double-time the whole song, but you came in with a half-time thing and saved the double-time bit for the chorus.

**AY:** Right. I think rather than going, "That's no good, try something else," the band lets me try things. I think with "Just A Girl" they got used to what I was playing and ended up liking it.

**RF:** As you start to work up the song, how is it presented to you?

**AY:** On that one, I don't think there was any discussion about an idea. I think they showed me the riff, I just came in, and we jammed. We all take part in the transitions

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and the arrangements. It's pretty rare now that a song is completely finished and arranged before it's brought in. So in some ways I get to bastardize other people's ideas, but I guess that's part of being in a band.

**RF:** *Tragic Kingdom*, which Interscope sat on forever, today is platinum six times over. Since people know the tunes, I'd like to go through it cut by cut and hear your thoughts. First song, "Spiderwebs."

**AY:** Tony had this bass line that was inspired by—I don't want to say James Brown—but it made me think of that. It was a really slow, funky rhythm, but it wasn't working for me. So I said, "Let's play it fast." It's weird because that particular bass line is a little awkward to play fast, but it worked.

My little intro on that one came about in a funny way. Every time we started the song in rehearsal, rather than counting the band in with four clicks, I just did that little intro. It ended up being the beginning of the album, just on a whim.

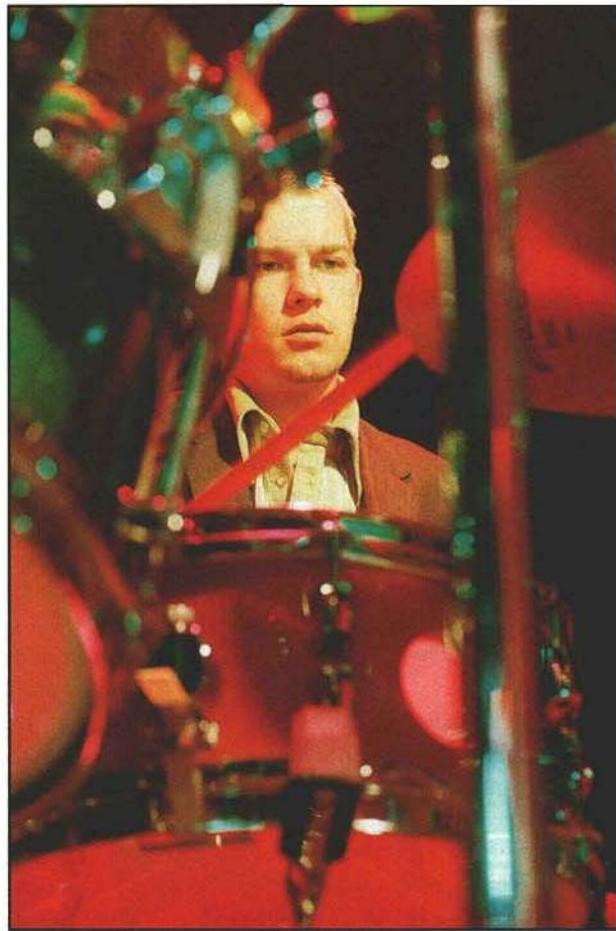
**RF:** "Excuse Me Mr."

**AY:** That song is old. We had probably been messing with that riff since 1992, but

we could never make it into a song; it never felt right. We couldn't arrange it and we'd just put it on the shelf and come back to it. Finally—I'm going to take credit for this one—I said, "Let's just put a straightforward 2-and-4 punk beat throughout the whole thing and sing it faster." There's only one drum beat in that whole song, except on the bridge, which has a kind of '20s Dixieland feel. So I decided to play a marching kind of thing there. That song was more or less in the Eric Stefani signature style.

**RF:** "Happy Now."

**AY:** That's a straightforward rock beat from me. It was pretty basic because it was a common chord progression, and the tempo wasn't anything extraordinary either. We just had to get it to feel right.



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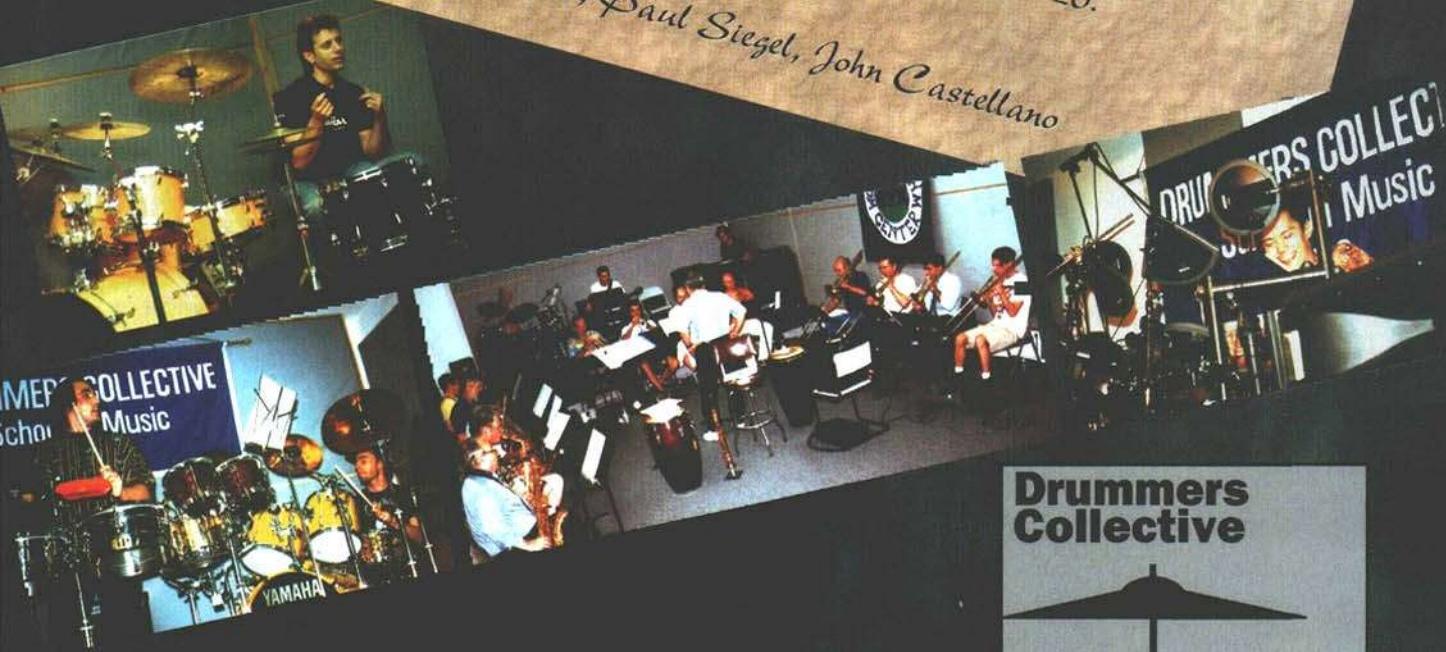
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**RF:** "Different People."

**AY:** That's an old one, written on our tour in 1992. Before we built the garage, we were jamming in a bedroom at the band house where Tom, Eric, and I lived. There was a good melody and the chord changes were good, but it took a long time to complete. Nobody really had any good ideas for a drum track. Then one day I came up with that kind of shuffle thing.

A band that used to do that type of groove a lot was UB40. I don't know if I directly stole that from them, but once I started playing that part, it gave Tony several options for bass lines. Once that was established, it started coming together really fast and we arranged the whole song in a day.

**RF:** "Hey You."

**AY:** That was the first song I learned to play left-handed. It has an easy beat, and since I felt I needed to work on my left hand, I tried leading with it on the hi-hat on this song. It was written by Tony and Gwen, and there's nothing too complicated about the drumming, just that left-hand challenge.

**RF:** "The Climb."

**AY:** That was completely written by Eric Stefani and it's really fun to play. There are many different parts. It's in 6/8, and the bridge is weird. I came up with the drum parts for the rest of the song, but Eric had the bridge worked out with a snare drum pattern on a drum machine. It was a little tricky for me, though; I didn't get it right away. I actually had to go, "What was that?" Once I worked it out I really liked it—a very cool part.

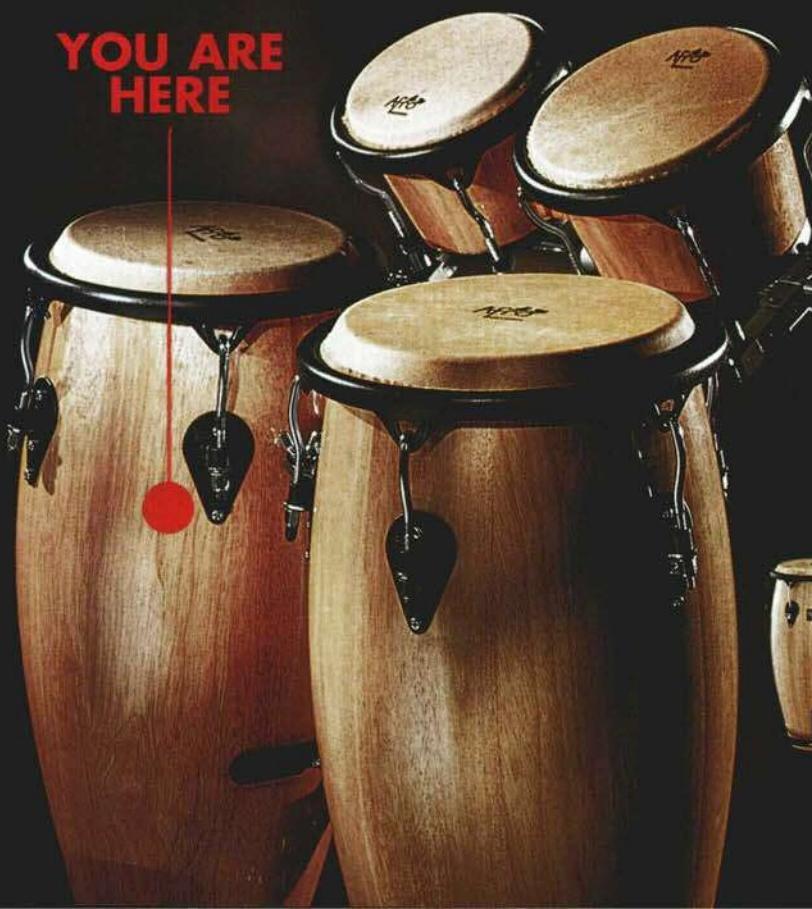
**RF:** You enjoyed the challenge of learning it?

**AY:** Very much. I'm not a rudimental snare drum player by any means, and that is a very syncopated thing, like you'd play in a marching band. That's strange territory to me, but I enjoyed working on it.

**RF:** How did you learn your rudiments and all that stuff, since, as you say, you only had one lesson?

**AY:** I did have some other experiences. During the time I was living in Fullerton [California] in 1995, I went to the junior college there for a semester and took a basic drum class so I could learn how to read and find out exactly what I was doing. They only offered it at 8:00 A.M., and I'm

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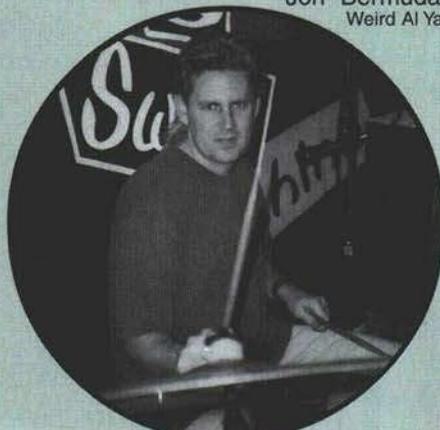
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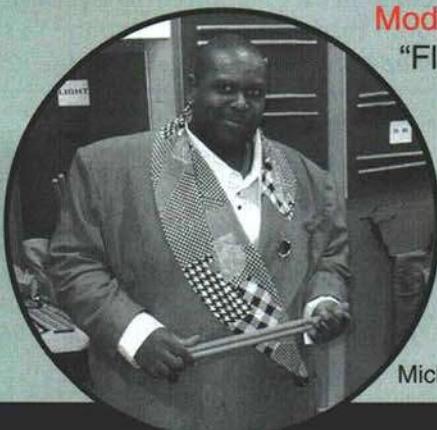
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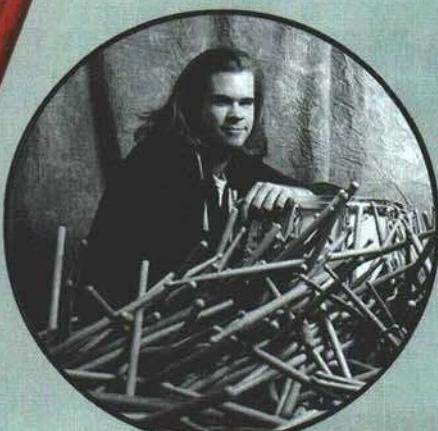


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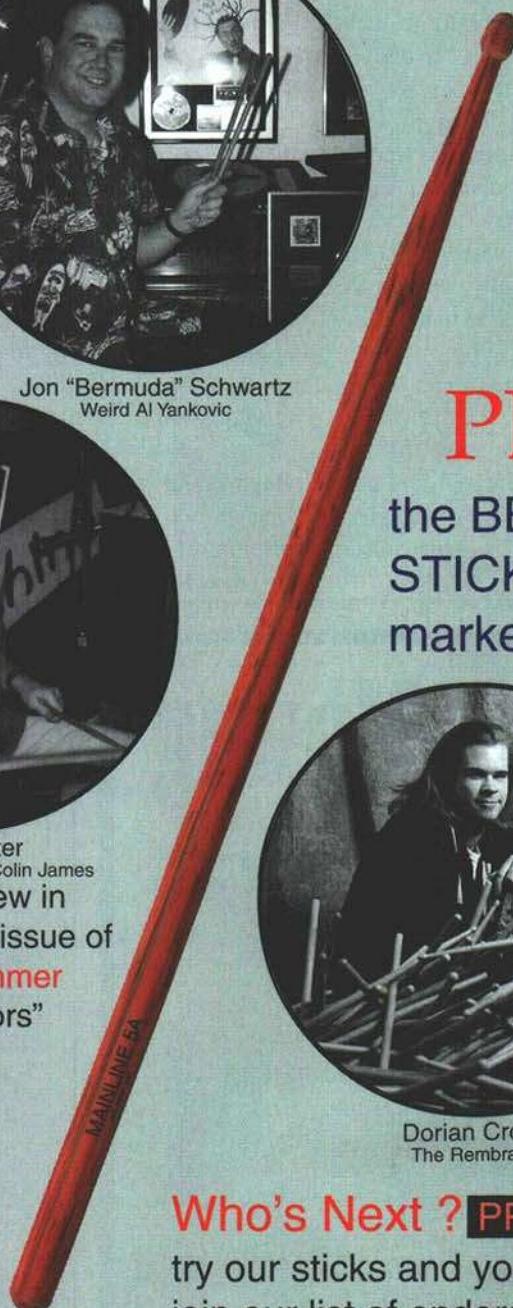
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not a morning person, but I did it anyway. I knew I had to do it.

**RF:** What did you get out of the class?

**AY:** I learned to read a little bit and I got better at my rudiments. Now I can do them properly.

**RF:** You had come all this way with your drumming without having studied; what made you feel it was necessary at that point?

**AY:** I think there were still a lot of areas where I wasn't doing things correctly. I didn't want to be just a feel player; I wanted to be a better all-around drummer.

**RF:** How do you feel rudimental knowledge is important to rock playing?

**AY:** It's incredibly important. You can do so many different things with rudiments, on the snare drum especially, and on the whole kit. They've really expanded my playing.

**RF:** Let's get back to the songs on the album. "Sixteen."

**AY:** Gwen wanted to write about this sixteen-year-old girl we knew and just how tough it is for all sixteen-year-old girls, how trying a time it can be. Musically it was just a one-day jam.

**RF:** "Sunday Morning."

**AY:** The main focus we all had on this one was to really accent the quarter notes. As for the drums, it has a straight bass and snare part, but I flip them and hit the snare on every quarter note during the choruses. That's one of our old tricks, where we do a reggae verse and go to a ska chorus. This one ended up being more of a rock thing, but with strong accents on the quarter notes by the guitar. The Clash used to do that a lot.

**RF:** "Don't Speak."

**AY:** That song went through a major change. It was a finished product, but then we simplified it. The tune originally had a kind of '70s Fender/Rhodes thing going on. The garage demo we made of it is really great; I like it better than what's on the record, actually. It's got a feel to it that is amazing. But it's long and has a lot of parts, so it was one of those record company suggestions.

I used a Ludwig snare drum on this tune, which is the snare drum I used for every song on our first album. It sounds totally different on this album. I actually dislike the snare sound on "Don't Speak"

immensely because it's really big and ballad-friendly, which is not really my snare sound.

Speaking of sounds, there are probably ten different snare sounds on this record, because I played ten different snare drums! We recorded in so many different places and I ended up using what was available. My favorite snare sound on the record is on "Sunday Morning." I used a '20s Ludwig all-metal drum on that one. I don't own that drum, but I wish I did. I also like the sound on "Spiderwebs," which is a 7x12 snare drum that Orange County Drum and Percussion made for me. That is the drum I play most of the time live.

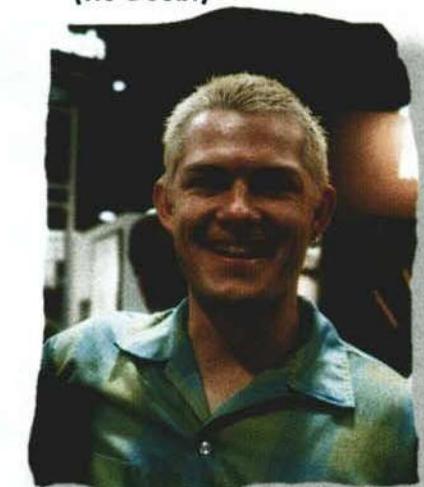
**RF:** "You Can Do It."

**AY:** We had this sort of disco song on our first album called "Let's Get Back," which we always liked to listen to and play. So for this record we wanted to do an all-out disco song. It's pretty simple—standard disco drum beats, which are pretty obvious.

I grew up listening to a lot of '70s rock, like Hendrix, Bob Marley, the Doors, Janis Joplin. My parents were hippies and we listened to the radio all the time, and I ended up hearing a fair amount of disco things.

# Adrian Young

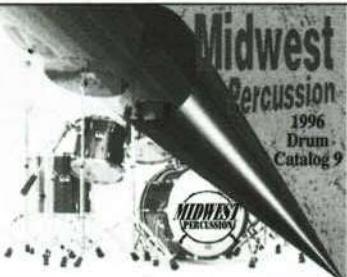
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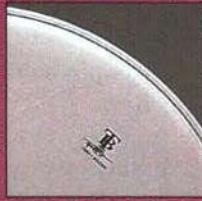
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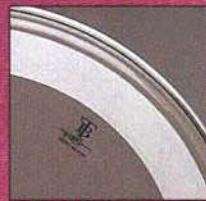
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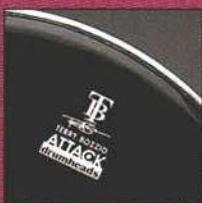
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Eighty-five to ninety percent of the disco songs have the same drum beat. For the verses, I just threw in the 16th-note pattern and then when I got to the chorus I did the traditional hi-hat thing where it opens up on the "&s." I played congas on that song, too.

**RF:** "World So Round."

**AY:** Nothing interesting on the drums. Actually, none of us liked the way it came out. I like the song, but the production is like bad white reggae. We should have recorded that one in a crappy garage, turned the mic's on, and played.

**RF:** "End It On This."

**AY:** I definitely wanted to incorporate a Stewart Copeland-esque approach mixed with the rock thing. I think a lot of people can hear that from what I'm playing on the hi-hat—those random hi-hat hits. At the same time there's that driving "four on the floor" bass drum pattern. No one brought a drum beat to me; I like to play that beat, so I just threw it in there.

**RF:** "Tragic Kingdom."

**AY:** Another Eric Stefani song, completely written by him. I had a hard time figuring out what fills to play on the intro. It's a

weird part and neither Eric nor I were happy with what I was coming up with. Finally, one day it occurred to me that I didn't have to accent every one of the hits. I had been trying to hit every accent while coming up with the fills. I realized I could accent certain ones and do fills over others.

The time goes back and forth between 6/8 and 4 throughout the song. That's probably the most complicated song we have on the record, and to play it tight in the studio was difficult. I had practiced that song to the metronome by myself, so I could play the whole thing by myself. I wanted to be as polished as possible before we went into the studio; I did a lot of practicing.

**RF:** Some of your material gets pretty energetic. How do you deal with that live? Do you have to prepare physically for a tour?

**AY:** I never really had to do too much of that. I've always been a high-energy person and in pretty good shape. I'm not in as good shape now; I'm not working out as much as I used to because I don't have a normal life anymore. I miss weight lifting, golfing, and other sports. But I don't need as much of my whole body to play drums as I used to, because I play more with my wrists as time goes by. I used to be a full-on, "use all of my arms and club the drums" person. That was tough, but now I can pretty much go all night and not get tired.

I play in punk bands on the side for fun, where every song is a million miles an hour, and I can do it. There's a local Orange County group called Manic Hispanic, and all their songs are really fast. I don't play that old kind of punk too often, so when they call me to fill in I actually have to practice to their tape just to build up stamina.

**RF:** At this stage of your drumming, what would you say are your assets and what needs improving?

**AY:** I would say my strongest asset is my drive to practice a lot, though I don't have as much time as I used to. We're on the road playing every night, so I'm not working on anything new, at least not lately. I just finished building a drum room inside my house, so now I'm going to do more practicing.

**RF:** What will you work on?

**AY:** I'll probably put on "Sir Duke" by Stevie Wonder [from *Songs In The Key Of*

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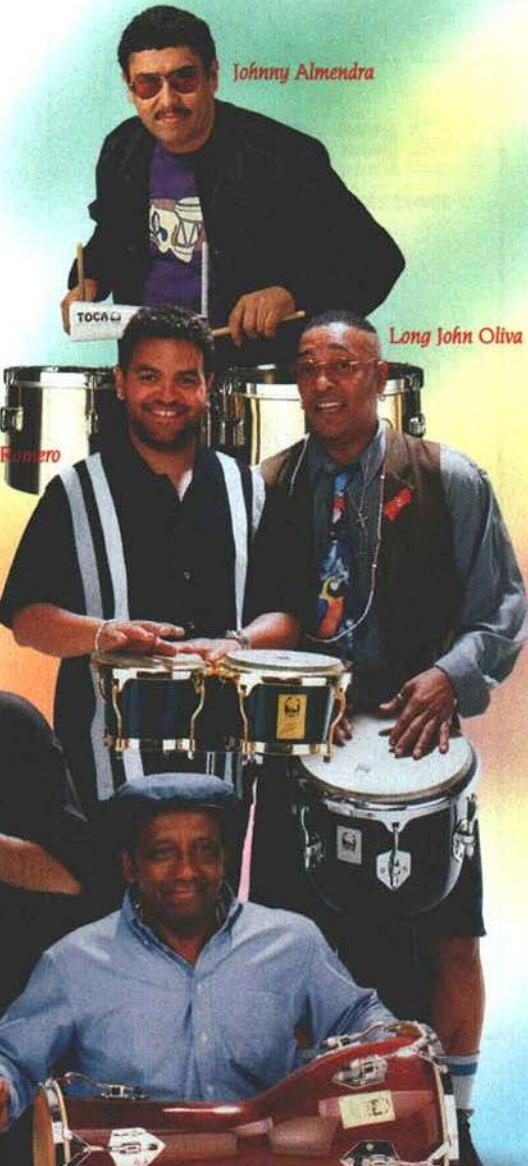


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*Life]* and play to that for a while, and then a couple days before the next tour I'll play the songs we're going to play to make sure I'm not rusty.

**RF:** Now that the band has been touring a bit, can you offer some tips on dealing with the live situation. Specifically, when you're on stage, what do you like to hear in your monitor mix?

**AY:** I like the bass drum to be as loud as possible, then a little bit of vocals, and then an equal mix of horns, bass, and guitar. I like all of that pretty high in the mix. I usually don't want my snare drum in the monitor mix because it's pretty loud anyway. Lately, since our production is of a higher level and it sounds a lot nicer than in the clubs we used to play, I'll put the snare in there just a little bit, because it can blend without tearing my head off. But that bass drum is usually the biggest challenge to get right.

I just talked to Tré Cool from Green Day, and he said he uses a Marshall cabinet as a monitor for the guitar. I'm going to try that, because that seems to be more natural than using a monitor where *everything* is coming out of it.

**RF:** What do you find yourself listening to most on stage?

**AY:** The bass, definitely. Bass and drums have to be like a hand in a glove in this band, and we try to keep it that way. The other instruments, at least from my perspective, play around us.

**RF:** Current plans?

**AY:** We're going to tour through the end of the summer, which will make it a total of two years touring for this record. We'll probably go into the studio this winter and hopefully put out an album by the summer of '98.

The most exciting thing about this band is that there have been no limits on what kind of sound or what kind of music we play. When we start writing for that next record we won't have any idea what the music is going to be like. If that sounds vague, well, that's a part of it—that's a part of my involvement in music and in this band. I can pretty much sum it up by saying, I don't know how I got here—but, hey, I'm here.



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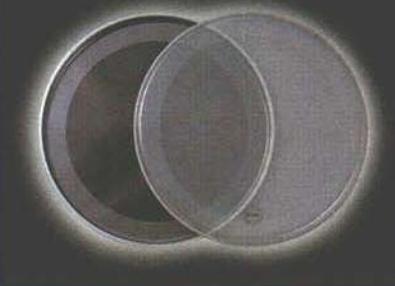
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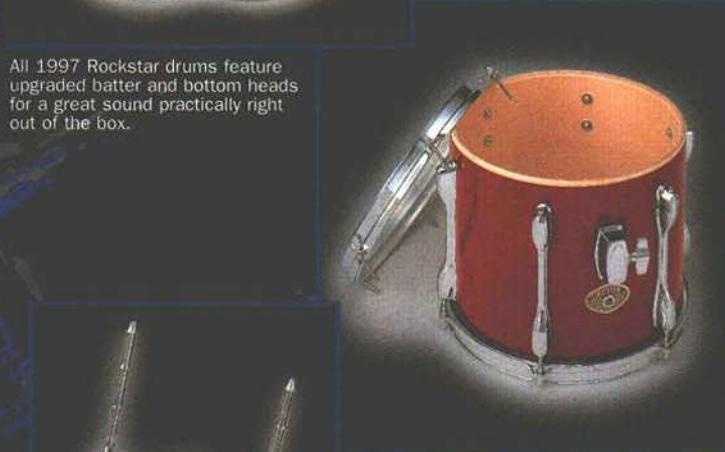
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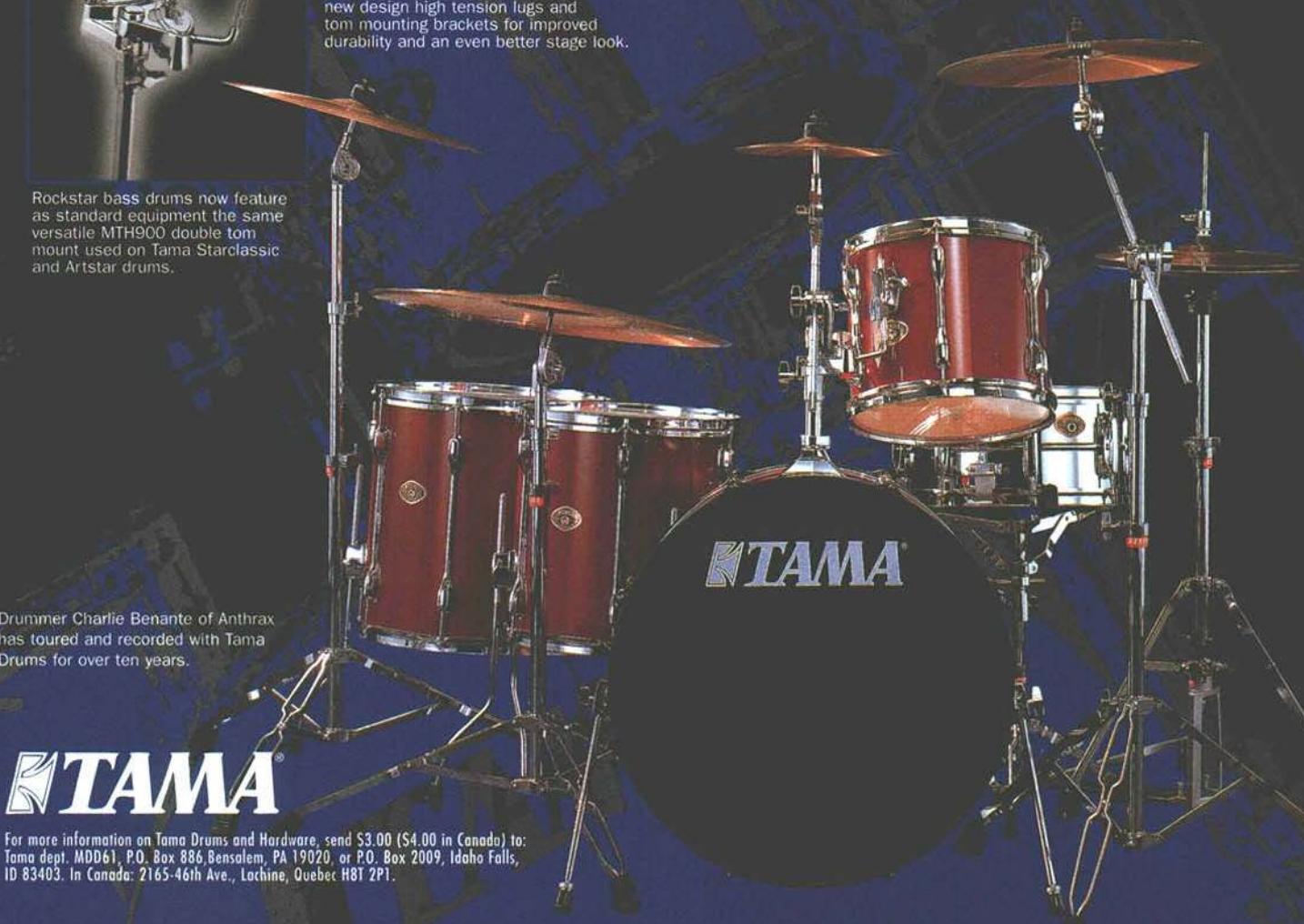


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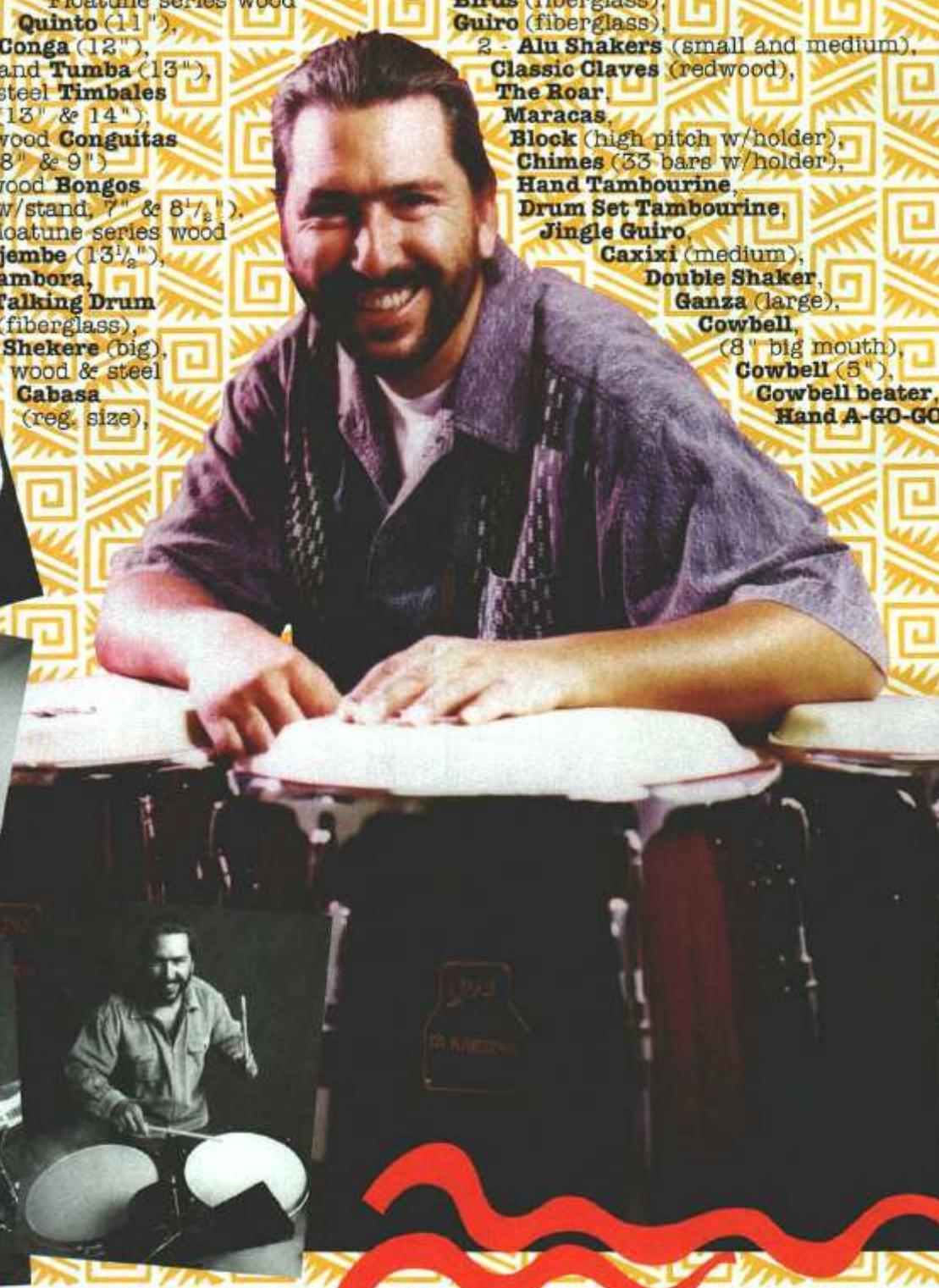
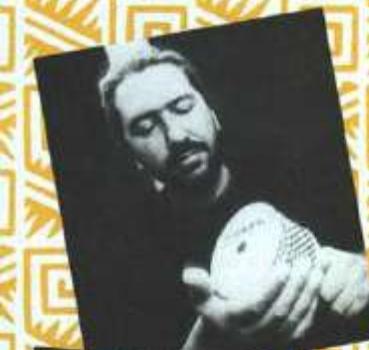
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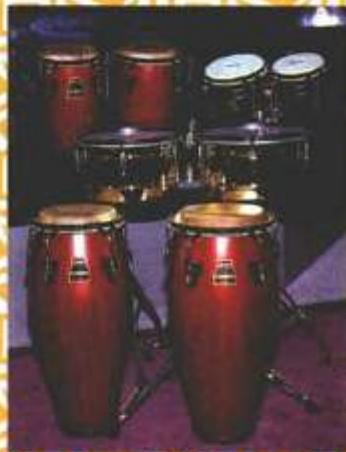


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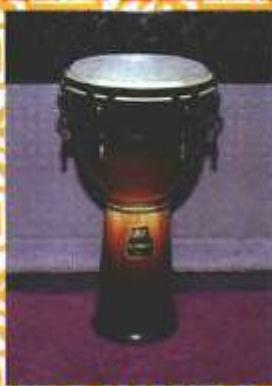
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# In Search Of The Perfect Ride Cymbal

by T. Bruce Witten

# CYMBAL SCHOLAR T. BRUCE WITTET GOES ON A QUEST TO FIND THE HOLY GRAIL OF RIDE CYMBALS, TAPPING THE WISDOM OF GREAT PLAYERS AND CYMBALSMITHS ALONG THE WAY.

**O**nce upon a time there was a young jazz drummer who had earned great acclaim and the recognition of his peers. But he was unhappy. You see, something was missing—something that another drummer, Tony Williams, possessed. It was a ride cymbal—but not just any workaday ride cymbal. No, Tony's ride cymbal was imbued with magical and exotic resonance. Our drummer coveted that cymbal, heard on so many Miles Davis recordings. It was just so *right*, and it became a shining beacon in the distance.

The young drummer rummaged fruitlessly through stacks of cymbals searching for the sound, despairing that he was getting no closer. Until one day in 1965, that is. Our friend's group happened to be on a double bill with Wayne Shorter's group, and the drumkit was to be shared. Tony Williams' drumkit, his cymbals. Our young drummer mounted the stage and was stopped for a moment in sheer reverence at the sight: The cymbal, *that* cymbal, sat on a flimsy stand right at arm's length. From his leather bag our drummer chose a good stick, not unlike the one Tony used. He sat on the throne, and everything was low, close, and comfortable. He let his right hand fall, and the stick bounced off the cymbal's

mottled surface like a quarter off a glass table.

Then a curious thing happened. The cymbal spoke to the young drummer. Odd...this was not the voice the young drummer recognized from the record albums. It was a small, hollow voice, not particularly assertive—ordinary, even—more like some of the sounds the young drummer had discounted in his own journey. The drummer continued riding, making many adjustments in an attempt to harness the thing. Finally, he stepped from the bandstand, and felt a rush of relief. The burden of the search had lifted from his shoulders, and he was free. In that instant the young drummer realized that he had in fact encountered the hallowed object—or similar ones—many times previous, without even realizing it.

The drummer in our parable is now a mature jazz musician working out of New York. Now young drummers approach *him* because he plays the perfect ride. His identity? Well, nothing really hinges on it, since his private drama has played out on a thousand stages. In one version or another, it's a familiar tale to many readers. (It's okay, Terry Clarke, your secret is safe!)

**T**here has always been a fascination for the ride cymbal that transcends the mundane attention accorded to the other members of the cymbal family. It may be down to the elusiveness and ambiguity of time and tone uniquely kept on the ride cymbal...ding, ding-a-ding. Time and tone—the attributes are inextricably bound. Each drummer has a different slant on the ding: Billy Higgins has a dancing triplet, Art Blakey a freight-train shuffle, Jack DeJohnette a clanging persistence, Neil Peart crystalline 8ths, Alex Van Halen a shrill blanket. Try to imagine what the tonal outcome would be if just one aspect were altered—touch, force of the attack, stick, cymbal, note phrasing. You play the ride and you play for keeps: It records your indelible touch like a polygraph.

These days, a whole lot of ink goes onto a cymbal before it leaves the factory—diameter, weight, type, sub-type, and the company name branded in letters you can read from an airplane. Just about the only stamp you never see is "The Perfect Ride." Fact is, the animal remains at large. Players have heard it calling in the distance, but few get within striking distance. In the course of this article, we'll try to get close enough for a snapshot—or at the very least, stumble on some tracks and gather eyewitness accounts.

If the walls of the Avedis Zildjian factory could talk, they'd tell a million tales of famous drummers (many long passed on) anguishing over the perfect ride—Cozy Cole, Dave Tough, Zutty Singleton. The shadow of their touch still registers on many thin cymbals of the post-war era, stacked to this day in the vault. "The ride cymbal, more than any other cymbal in the setup, is a reflection of a player's signature," confirms Zildjian's Colin Schofield. "When you think of any of the great players, their approach to the ride cymbal, the ride cymbal patterns, etc. are such a big part of the creation of their signature—their voice."

We're talking about aesthetics, too. It's hard to imagine a more complex source of primitive delight: a metal disc, stressed and pounded for strength, that emits a pleasing resonance. Our earliest ancestors must have grinned ear to ear at the discovery, just as we catch ourselves eyeing the light diffusing from the dimpled

**Thanks to these emerging players, and to the jazzers who stayed with it, a whole generation's time feel has been freed from the closed hats of the electronic era. The ride cymbal, very much the link with the fertile musical tradition of yesteryear, has returned.**

surface under stage lamps, and maybe giving the cymbal a couple of gratuitous hits, oblivious to all around us.

### **What Is Perfect?**

There is an old expression: "One man's meat is another's *poisson* [the French word for fish]." Ginger Baker once explained his elaborate Cream cymbal setup to a puzzled British interviewer: Pointing to the largest of his ride cymbals, perforated with numerous rivet holes, some still carrying rivets, Ginger quipped, "This one's for *playing on*." What he meant is that for signaling the pulse, as opposed to mere glancing blows, he would go to this one most often. He wasn't kidding, either. The same cymbal appears twenty-five years later on CDs. Balance the above with Charlie Watts' anecdote about sitting in on Ginger's kit, and breaking sticks on the same cymbal, which Ginger buttoned down so tightly it wouldn't move: Charlie declared Ginger's perfect ride unplayable. If ever the cliché "different strokes for different folks" ought to be invoked, this is the time.

Or different strokes for the same folks: Dr. Jekyll worships Art Blakey's washy, thin, old cymbals while Mr. Hyde lusts for something as heavy and pingy as the day is long. Sabian president Dan Barker told me that in a former life with Avedis Zildjian, he sweated to satisfy both masters when building prototypes for Steve Gadd.

The resulting schizophrenic cymbal, best heard on Manhattan Jazz Quartet records, embodies razor-sharp articulation and a trace of Blakey's trashy overtones—in an 18" cymbal, to boot.

The conundrum is well known to Paiste, confirms their Rich Mangicaro: "Regarding the so-called perfect ride...I've heard many descriptions of this elusive animal over the years, and it certainly varies from player to player. From my dealings with the artists,

the ride seems to be the most personal choice and the most difficult cymbal to decide on. It usually takes the longest amount of time to find the ride when we are in our selecting sessions."

Like many of his jazz contemporaries, Jeff Hamilton has done hard time searching for the perfect ride. Now on the other side of his problem—almost—he adds, "Everybody's got their own feel for the ride cymbal. Barrett Deems, talking about his ride cymbal, was quoted as saying, 'It's a perfect feel, just like throwing a whisky bottle through a window.' It's that crash thing he gets."

Colin Schofield has found that "people describe the 'perfect ride cymbal' in terms that you can crash it like a crash cymbal and get total, 100% stick articulation as well. In terms of a sliding scale, you're talking about the varying degree between stick definition and the amount of wash and undertone, but then on top of that you're talking about the *quality* of sound and the *texture* of both the stick sound and the undertone."

Wild horses couldn't drag many

drummers from the conclusion that the master blend is found in older, Turkish-made *K* Zildjians. There is a gnawing truth that a thin, old *K* with spread and a "tah" sound when touched with the bead of the stick spells a perfect ride, at least for many jazz drummers and many of today's retro-rock drummers.

Sabian product specialist Nort Hargrove appreciates that drummers are playing thin and shimmery cymbals, describing them dryly as "our dad's cymbals, which we didn't like at the time! There's a special feeling you get playing those 'softer' cymbals, and, ultimately, playing is as much a mental thing as it is about sound. Your

'perfect ride' would describe a cymbal that makes you want to play it again."

Feel good, look good, sound good! Just when we get angled for our first photo, someone blunders into the picture—in this instance Norwegian drummer Jon Christensen. His trademark sound is also extracted from a '60s 22" Turkish *K*. But wouldn't you know it, it confounds our benchmark: It's a pig of a plate, weighing close to nine pounds! "It's very thick and heavy," Christensen says. "But when you play on it, it responds very nicely. Of course, you can hear the overtones in the mid-range, and after you play on it for a couple of seconds the bottom thing also comes out. Sometimes when

I play—people think I play soft, actually—I need a cymbal that gives me some kind of a fight."

Back to square one: The perfect ride is user-friendly—it'll even leap tall buildings—but only after raising a fuss will it yield to our wishes. Here we go again with seemingly irreconcilable demands—even in a heavier cymbal we want a forgiving quality, with the stick sinking a little into the surface. There is a basic ambiguity at first listen due to some magic interplay of ping and wash. The thing will cut through if beckoned, or mellow and stretch to fill wide spaces. It will do more, or less, responding to the musical needs, personality, and physiognomy

## Rides We Have Loved

by T. Bruce Wittet

Here are some selections (many from off the beaten track) that form a catalog of various ride sounds. Some of them have suffered in the CD mastering process (see Eddie Marshall with The Fourth Way), while others have gained (Miles Davis *Live At The Plugged Nickel*).

DRUMMER	ARTIST/RECORDING	COMMENTS
BARRIEMORE BARLOW	Jethro Tull, <i>Thick As A Brick</i>	Paiste heavy 602; tip of the stick yields solid attack, even on quick accents
HAL BLAINE	<i>Let's Play Drums</i> , "Secret Agent Man"	bad track, but great-sounding 22" A Zildjian
ART BLKEY	<i>Three Blind Mice</i> , "That Old Feeling"	K Zildjian, waves of intensity, relentless
JOHN BONHAM	Led Zeppelin, <i>Four</i> , "Stairway To Heaven"	Paiste 2002 played with lilting swing—the perfect sound for the track
JON CHRISTENSEN	Eberhard Weber, <i>Yellow Fields</i>	crystalline sounds emerge from heavy, marching-weight 1960s K
JACK DEJOHNETTE	Gateway, <i>Homecoming</i>	fifty ways to make "clang" a beautiful thing, played on his own line of Sabian cymbals
JOHN GUERIN	Joni Mitchell, <i>Court &amp; Spark</i>	A Zildjians, cracked Zildjians, China cymbals, Smokey sounds
JOEY HEREDIA	Billy Childs, <i>Is This It</i>	Sabian HH cymbal mounted almost vertically and clamped down; sounds gated
JIM KELTNER	A.J. Croce, <i>That's Me At The Bar</i> , "I Meant What I Said"	Paiste Rough Ride caws like a crow
MEL LEWIS	<i>Central Park North</i> , "Don't Get Sassy" Gerry Mulligan, <i>Live At The Village Vanguard</i>	old KS, A Zildjian Swish an album's worth of Lewis dark K bliss
RICK MAROTTA	Randy Newman, <i>Little Criminals</i> , "Kathleen"	late night in my car I thought my radiator had sprung a leak; 22" Old K "struck with 'hazzle' of the stick"
EDDIE MARSHALL	The Fourth Way, <i>The Sun &amp; The Moon Have Come Together</i> , title track	quarter-note feel worth the effort finding this one: loose funk with clean, A Zildjian overtones
HARVEY MASON	Fourplay	Mr. Articulation in his element; Sabian HH ride
DAVE MATTACKS	Fairport Convention, <i>Rising For The Moon</i> , "One More Chance"	A Zildjian Mini-Cup drives rock band
MITCH MITCHELL	Jimi Hendrix, <i>Electric Ladyland</i> , "1983"	big old A Zildjian medium, with nice "click" and wash sounds
BOB MOSES	Gary Burton, <i>Ring</i>	crisp and sibilant, thanks in part to those obvious ride cymbal lovers at ECM
BUGS PEMBERTON	Jackie Lomax, <i>Home Is In My Head</i> , title track	22" or 24" thinnish Zildjian: the wash envelops the track
RALPH PETERSON	Art	Art Blakey's cymbal sound times ten: Spizz or Sabian HH
PHIL SELWAY	Radiohead, <i>The Bends</i> , "High And Dry"	just enough stick and lots of room sound: a Paiste Signature or his new A Zildjian
AKIRA TANA	<i>Blue Motion</i> , all tracks	splashy warmth, deep overtones, Sabian HH
CARLOS VEGA	James Taylor, <i>Never Die Young</i>	compendium of sparkling Paiste cymbal sounds
TONY WILLIAMS	Miles Davis, <i>Live At The Plugged Nickel</i>	frightening archive of the cymbal that caused all the trouble, heard from up close and from room mic's

my of the drummer. And all this will be found in one cymbal...hmmm. Pity the cymbal maker.

## Yesterday And Today

Looking back, why "ride"? Why not "time cymbal" or "cymbal-designated-most-appropriate-for-conveying-the-pulse"? Certainly, the notion of riding—of galloping—makes more sense than some of the monikers listed in *Zildjian Cymbal Setup* booklets circa 1958. There we find "top," "bounce," and "bop" cymbals. The latter is a musical signpost for the time Kenny Clarke began transferring the beat from the snare drum and hats to a larger cymbal. Bebop jazz became inseparable from the quarter-note-ride-cymbal pulse with its various triplet subdivisions. As bebop grew from swing, the concept of the ride cymbal began to firm up. Speaking of "firm," drummers today would have trouble with yesterday's rides. Many were thin enough to bend in half, and flopped around like an umbrella in a cyclone. (Maybe that's why "bounce" cymbals were so named?)

Sometime after World War II ride cymbals grew heavier, making it easier for players to articulate rhythms with the bead or even butt of the drumstick. They generally hovered in the 18" to 24" region, unless you were swing drummer Mousey Alexander (26"!) or Roy Edmunds, long before his day gig with Sabian: "My ride was a 17" medium, which was actually a popular size in London at the time."

Whereas a crash cymbal is designed to explode with a single trounce of the stick, the ride is intended to resist the temptation. The factors that make a ride cymbal distinct from a crash are usually weight, bell, taper, and profile. It is not enough to say that a ride cymbal might be heavier than a comparably sized crash; the *distribution* of that weight is what's essential. Then again, it's not just the so-called taper, it's the profile. Phew! Fortunately, a proper discussion of cymbal anatomy exists: Check out Hugo Pinksterboer's *The Cymbal Book*.

Fashion has always steered cymbal manufacture. In the same 1958 publication described earlier, 24" rides are the rage. Fast-forward to the 1969 *Cymbal Setups*, and it's mostly 20" rides, with a smattering of 22s and even 18s. Certain specialty models endure, but you can lay money on the fact that Neil Peart's famous *Ping* ride is not the same *Ping* described in the 1958 Avedis Zildjian *Cymbal Setups* brochure.

Manufacturers are somewhat reluctant to narrowly identify trends; they pride themselves in being tooled up to face all eventualities. Clearly, though, *something* is happening out there in retro-land. "Recently," notes Rich Mangicaro, "I've been working with many drummers in the 'new' music scene—or the 'new/old' scene, right? Anyway, they are using the ride as more of a ride/crash and, having a smaller setup, utilizing the ride as one of their bigger crashes. Since volume levels are very high, the ride still needs to be on the heavy side, but generally they want something they can

use for both applications. They tend to ride on the edge a lot."

"Trends?" poses Dan Barker. "One thing I would say is that there has been a real attraction to softer-sounding ride cymbals. That's what guys doing the trio gigs are looking for; if they get a big band gig, they prefer to mike. There's a real concern that the touch and feel of a ride is as important as the actual sound coming out."

"If you're asking whether players like Peter Erskine and Adam Nussbaum are looking for things that are very different from what they had before, I think it really depends on the musical setting. But," Colin Schofield grants, "you could say that the ride cymbal is getting very popular again."

It did look pretty bleak for the ride in the '80s. Much timekeeping was done on hi-hats, both hands chasing sequenced 16th notes. Terry Bozzio announced in these pages that he had forsaken the ride. Peter Gabriel, the anti-ride personified, specifically recorded his third solo album sans cymbals, and henceforth a whole generation of fledgling songwriters implored the drummer to leave the cymbal bag at home. But now, as the millennium expires—just about the time real drums and cymbals were supposed to be completely replaced by machines—the ride is having the last laugh.

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chock full of puzzling details. However, a tour of the shop floor reveals few surprises, and manufacturers are reasonably forthright about their goings on. Only occasionally will conversation grind to a halt and cymbal makers proclaim, "Trade secret time." Their silence surrounds two aspects of cymbal-making: the alloy and the manufacturing process.

The Zildjian secret is an enduring chapter in popular cymbal lore, a mystery to all but a few trusted employees of the Zildjian company (and Sabian, who use the identical process on their top lines). It is a missing link in the procedure for mixing eighty percent copper and twenty percent tin at high temperatures and arriving at a workable metal—B20 alloy, as it is known in the trade. Saltier souls than I have suggested that foundry workers hover over the crucibles and spit (or worse) at a key time in the recipe.

Paiste didn't purport a metallurgical secret of this nature until fairly recently, when it announced the *Paiste* series alloy. Neither B20, like many of the best, nor B8, like many of the rest, it might be expected that this alloy rides in the middle.

In general, the cymbal manufacturing process follows this flow: The alloy is formed into metal discs (or castings), which are bumped and hammered into shape—by hand, machine, or some combination of the two. The rough forms are then usually lathed to shave off excess metal. The resulting rings are of no small consequence. A tight lathing pattern will produce a more precise, controlled sound, while a wider, deeper lathe ring pattern will cause all hell to break loose as the harmonics scream around the circumference of the cymbal. Either way, the effect is slightly muted when a "brilliant" finish is applied. The buffing required to produce such finishes smooths down the sharp peaks of the lathe lines and dulls the capacity to produce transients. It seems somehow unfair that a shiny cymbal might produce less brilliance of sound than a dull one—one good reason to hear with our ears, not our eyes.

UFIP uses the same B20 alloy on many of its cymbals but employs a centrifuge: the molten metal is spun in a mold until it assumes the desired, finished shape. Even the cup is present at this stage, making theirs the only real "cast" cymbals. The

UFIP "secret" apparently results in the inherently thicker cups and thinner edges of their cymbals, which, it seems to me from watching my grandfather separate butter fat in a centrifuge at the dairy, is only natural. Making virtues of immutable manufacturing processes is fair game in the cymbal trade.

All cymbal makers shroud certain processes in secrecy. Take the satiny, pebbled finish used on Sabian *DeJohnette Encores*, the hammering used on Zildjian *A Customs*, or the extreme measures taken with UFIP's *Natural Series*, which come out crusty as a Roman coin.

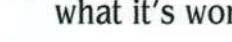
We've heard it for ages: Good cymbals are instruments of indefinite pitch. Put them on a scope, and any cymbal worth its salt will peak into several octaves, with no particular note dominating. Still, some drummers claim allegiance to particular pitches on the scale, testing for such tones by dropping the head of a stick vertically alongside the base of the cup, where a more unadulterated note may be heard.

Keith Copeland arrived at the Sabian factory looking for a cymbal pitched to C. "I looked at him," Dan Barker recalls, "and said, 'Really?' A cymbal has more than one note; you can't center in on a certain harmonic or even a certain pitch. When we were trying to find Keith's cymbal, we simply tried to get the bell close to the pitch he wanted, hoping that the rest of the ride worked. In my estimation, pitch is a secondary factor, not a good determining factor. High pitch versus low pitch—that's one thing. But you should be looking for a good blend of harmonics."

There is a small window of opportunity during manufacturing when a cymbal may be tempered, hammered, and lathed. After this point a cymbal cannot be physically altered—with the exception of riveting, which can be done at any time. Gretsch catalogs from the 1940s listed regular K Zildjian cymbals and A Zildjian sizzle cymbals curiously advertised as "made in Constantinople." Fifty years later, the practice of riveting cymbals is enjoying a rebirth. Usually holes are drilled at regular intervals, equidistant from the circumference of the cymbal, although once in a while patterns are seen resembling a stop sign near a hunting camp. Rivets can add a bright sound—or a dark one, depending on whether they're made from steel, brass, or

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copper. Jeff Hamilton prefers lighter, shorter rivets from an Ace Hardware store in L.A., the fewer the better. Increasing the number of rivets may dampen a cymbal and reduce their vibration—which is certainly not the original intention.

### Choosing The Perfect Ride

Choosing a ride is very much a matter of second-guessing which attributes—overtones, wash, ping, pitch—will prevail in a working situation. If it is any consolation, all drummers have difficulty choosing rides. Even endorsers who select cymbals at the factory (read: "kid in a candy shop") report the same difficulties as ordinary mortals. In fact, their problems are magnified!

Choosing a ride is like tasting wine. It is best to sample briefly, take a break, and then resume. If too much is consumed too quickly, the sound intoxicates and befuddles the senses.

Decide on the musical style, or range of styles, in which the cymbal will be used: rock 'n' roll, country, jazz, swing, funk, folk.... None are mutually exclusive, but each will suggest particular demands. For example, a loud rock band will call for a cymbal that will cut through with similar intensity to the hi-hat; a jazz trio will require neither a dominant hi-hat nor ride cymbal.

Since most stores will not loan cymbals like libraries do books, how do you replicate playing conditions when selecting

cymbals? Here are a few suggestions.

Don't leave home without your usual sticks. Few shops will allow you to splinter a pair of new 3As on the narrow possibility you might be buying today. If you play more than one stick type, bring the whole bag along, since all should figure into your selection. Even if you favor one stick model for all styles, it is enlightening to hear alternatives—even synthetics—since each material has its own attributes and will draw out different tones.

So grab your trusty stick and play familiar patterns. No point executing jazz time at 370 bpm if the ride is destined to perform Offspring covers. Be reassured that all music is credible when played well, and play your straight 8ths with authority and increasing intensity. Is the resulting wash annoying to your ears, or does it complement the stick sound? Ask someone else to play the same pattern, then position yourself at the far end of the store. Note the changes as sound travels. Note what happens to this pristine sound when the guitarist in the next aisle launches into "Smoke On The Water."

It might help to bring a "master ride" with you. You could either borrow a cymbal you like and try to approximate it, or take along the one you seek to replace. There's nothing like having the best and worst at hand to deter you from taking home another dud. Bringing your hats could also help you match the intensity of the ride sound with the closed-hat articulation.

Here's a suggestion that may sound a little peculiar: In the interests of countering a sterile showroom environment, bring a *Walkman* loaded with a cassette of any band playing in styles similar to those you will be playing. Put on the headphones, crank up the volume, and ride along. You will hear which sounds project and which are buried—at least through the *Walkman* mix. At the very least, you will create a musical context with familiar reference points.

Think that's weird? One hears stories that decades ago jazz guys would select cymbals without even playing them! Jeff Hamilton remembers, "A lot of the older guys would pick the cymbal up, rest it by its bell on one thumb, and use their other thumb to thump the cymbal. By holding the cymbal up to their ear, they could hear these overtones. I don't know how they did it."

We've all got our stories. Once I timidly handed Billy Higgins a ride cymbal to autograph. He put it on his index finger, cast his eye across it, and gave it a little scuff of his thumb nail. "That's a good cymbal," he affirmed. But how could he be sure? I protested. He paused, and before responding, took a marker and inscribed *Billy Higgins, Peace*. "It's just a feeling, a heritage with this cymbal." It wasn't even like it was a revered old K. Billy had his ears tuned to something I wasn't hearing.

Zildjian's John King remembers similar methods from Jo Jones: "Papa Jo would lightly tap a cymbal and would, in essence,

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## FRED HOEY (1920-1994)

Fred Hoey's start in the music industry came at an early age upon winning the 1936 National Rudimental Drummer Competition. His illustrious career in the field of music as an author, clinician, and authority in the world of percussion afforded him many opportunities. In the mid 70s, Fred Hoey launched the CB 700 line of drums and percussion. This unique line was designed by Hoey to service the educational percussion market in a comprehensive way. As Vice President of Sales for C. Bruno in the early 1980s, Hoey created the Gibraltar brand name of drum hardware and initiated its first designs. The mid 80s brought Hoey to oversee the Remo, Inc. San Antonio Distribution Center where he participated in product design, development, and sales direction. Throughout his career, Fred Hoey remained active as a prominent Southwestern performing percussionist. He also wrote several drum methods still in distribution by Mel Bay Publications. He was a charter member of the Percussive Arts Society and an educator whose influence on percussionists continues with the PAS Fred Hoey Memorial Scholarship.

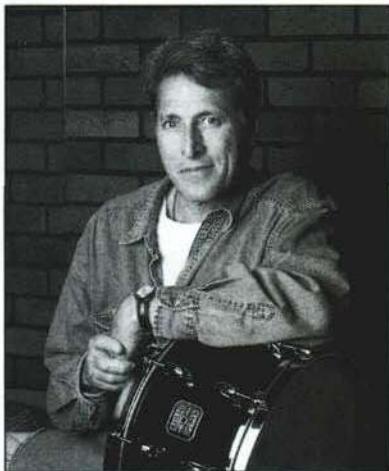
## LARRIE LONDIN (1943-1992)

Larrrie Londin was a popular session drummer for pop, country, and jazz artists. A member of the Detroit based Headliners in the mid-60s, Londin was one of the first white musicians signed to Motown on its V.I.P. subsidiary label. As a session drummer, he played on a number of Motown hits by such artists as Marvin Gaye, the Supremes and the Temptations. In addition, Londin toured with Chet Atkins, Jerry Reed, Glen Campbell and Elvis Presley, including Presley's last two concerts in 1977. Following those tours, Londin began concentrating on studio work, recording with Waylon Jennings, B.B. King, Dolly Parton, Joe Cocker, Linda Ronstadt, Olivia Newton-John, Barbara Mandrell, Randy Travis, Reba McEntire, George Strait and many others. Mr. Londin received the "Most Valuable Player Award" for 1978, 1979 and 1980 from the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences; was voted "Best Drummer" for 1984 and 1986 by the Academy of Country Music; and was designated "Country Drummer of the Year" in 1985 and 1986 by Modern Drummer magazine. His influence on percussionists continues with the PAS Larrie Londin Memorial Scholarship.

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'hear' the shape of the cymbal. The shape really dictates if the cymbal is going to open up enough and give the proper amount of shimmer. The other thing about Papa Jo: He would look to see how the cymbal vibrated around the circle after you strike it—he used to call the visual effect 'red devils.' He would say, 'Look at the red devils!'"

Believe it or not, the *telephone* has become a tool for ardent ride fanatics. The Blair 'N Drums advertisement, "Elvin played Ks, so can you," attracts seekers from several continents, and owner Blair has been known to preach long-distance to customers by playing his cymbal finds over the phone. "The first thing I'll do is hit it as a crash; a lot of the times if it sounds good as a crash, it'll sound good as a ride. Usually if the bell sounds good, it'll sound good all around. People like the thinner ones. And the edges should go up and down; there again, it'll be a thinner cymbal. I've been weighing them for a long time: Some of the nicest 20" Ks have weighed four pounds on the nose."

Nodar Rode of Manhattan Drum Shop

comments: "I don't really believe in this a hundred percent, but certain people do have the ability to recognize a good cymbal over the telephone. I'd prefer to hear the cymbal in my presence. A telephone is a good thing if you have nothing else."

Something to remember when choosing rides is that for each "ping" there must be a little spread. Once other instruments are added to the mix, attack-oriented sounds tend to get lost without a little substance behind them. All that said, sometimes it's nice to have a heavy monster with an unambiguous *clang*, especially in the studio when engineers neglect to boost the overhead mics.

Financing a new ride usually means selling an old one. A word of caution, though: If you have any doubt about selling a ride cymbal, *don't* do it. The "Rule Of The Ride" reads that just when you begin to take your old friend for granted, another drummer sits in on your kit, and *presto*, your dream ride emerges—just when you were about to trade it in for something new and shiny. Ride cymbals, more than crashes, are one-offs, and despite the incredible manufacturing consistency possible these days, what's gone is truly gone. If your ride seems to be losing its appeal, sometimes it's just a matter of shelving the cymbal either until tastes change or *you* come back around to it.

Finally, another "Rule Of The Ride" insists that you give equal time to cymbals other drummers have passed over. Take another look at that lonely ride hugging the dark recess of the shop rack like a rag doll no child wants. It may have a unique appeal. Maybe there's a warp, or a little "dip" in the sound, or maybe there is a predominance of a certain pitch or something else funny. You *did* want your ride to be distinctive, didn't you? Well, a delightful irony of the perfect ride cymbal is that it just might be *imperfect*.

**Perception & Projection**

A significant revelation for all drummers is when they discover the discrepancy between what they hear at close range and what the audience hears at a distance. A common example is loosely tuned drums in a loud, un-miked situation: They might sound good to you from behind the kit, but no pitch differentiation can be detected by the audience—just thudding. It's much the

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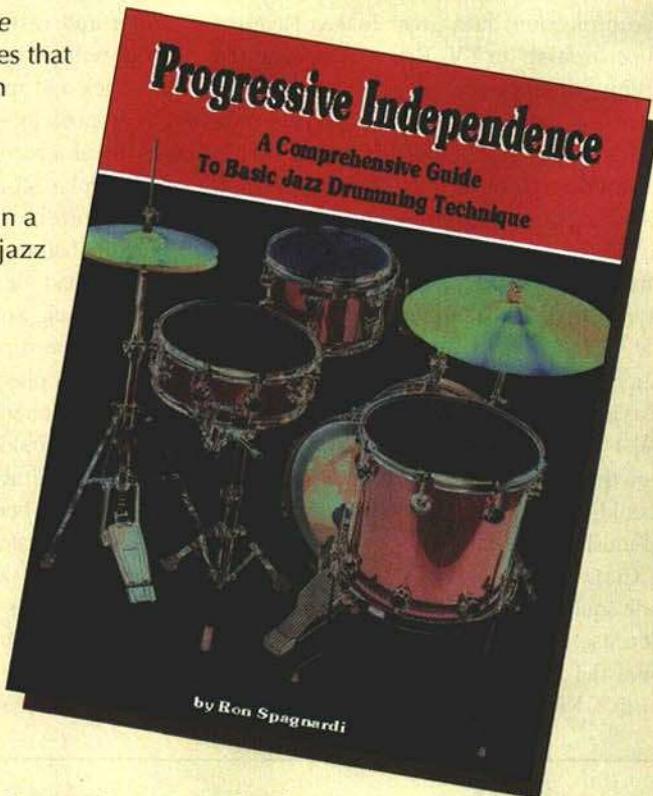
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same with cymbals.

Nort Hargrove experienced a revelation of his own when he asked a rock drummer to field-test some prototype rides in a fairly large club. For fun, he had the drummer put up a couple of cymbals intended for acoustic jazz gigs. Nort was surprised to find that the ride that cut through the amplified music the best was a 20" flat ride. Nort's analysis was that the flat ride might have lacked weight and volume, but it occupied a frequency in the mix shared by no other instrument.

Here's another account about perception and projection: Jazz great Joshua Redman is performing on TV. Brian Blade is at the drums, kind of bouncing around behind his kit like a mannequin. Brian's playing on a funky old drumset, and this dream ride is projecting through the TV's three-inch speaker. Must be a grungy old Istanbul *K*, right? Wrong! Even Colin Schofield was amazed to discover, "His main ride cymbal is an early '70s A Zildjian 20" crash cymbal," Colin reveals. "Probably a lot of other players would hear the cymbal Brian's playing and say, 'Man, that's the ride cymbal I've been looking for all my life—it's got the ping and the wash.' But if they would actually play it, it might sound kind of mushy to them."

Certainly, the role of sticks in projecting ride sound is key: All things being equal, if you use a hickory stick and then a maple one, the hickory will project better. Vic Firth's Rick Kowarek notes, "Things that

particularly affect the sound of the cymbal are wood type, tip shape, and tip size. Those three things offer a variety of variables that determine what sound you're going to extract from that cymbal. When you talk about 'the perfect ride cymbal,' you have to think, *is there one?* It really depends on what stick you're using with that cymbal!"

## Making Your Ding On The Perfect Ride

Unless your ride is an iron skillet, there will always exist the distinct threat that the louder and faster you ride, the more its sound will get out of control. Harnessing the attack and spread in a dynamic fashion is very much the art of playing the ride and arriving at a recognizable ding. Fifty years ago, cymbal companies were marketing thin and medium cymbals. Back then, players really had to struggle to achieve clarity, and they had all sorts of ways of sharpening the attack. Some filed the beads of their sticks, some dipped them in nail polish. They would play near the bell for articulation, and closer to the edge to invoke a roar. They would lay the shank of the stick (the "nozzle," according to Rick Marotta) alongside the body of the cymbal to get a low-pitched, gated crash effect. Ideal rides would have several "sweet spots" where desirous blends of tone and articulation occurred, and sound didn't wash away like the surf.

A vigilant player will find that even a

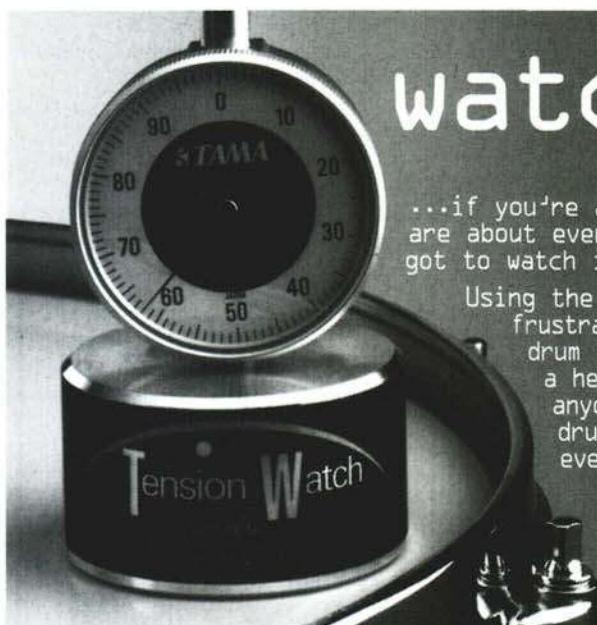
sour, cantankerous ride has a sweet spot or two. Often this is a matter of putting the necessary amount of...er...time into the instrument until the surface is mapped out and the relationship yields what is needed.

Some drummers play with sticks high above the cymbal, swinging in a huge arc, thumbs up on the stick in a French grip. Others disavow the practice, claiming the sticks ought to be an inch or two above the cymbal at rest, with palms down, facing the cymbal. Some like to articulate every note, considering it cheating to employ the natural bounce of the stick. Others manipulate the natural rebound of the stick to facilitate quick tempos. The middle ground is as varied as individual physiognomy and opinion.

Most players adjust normal riding techniques when moving to the bell, striking with a good broadside in order to move more metal and produce a full sound. Oddly, the old Latin method advocates landing the tip of the stick on the bell, sometimes holding it there for effect—which brings us to dead-sticking.

Steve Gadd videos are excellent primers on how a drummer can control cymbal wash by leaving the stick planted on the ride to quell vibration. Similarly, old Miles Davis film clips show Jimmy Cobb alternating live- and dead-sticking, effectively controlling a thin ride just by alternating finger pressure on the stick.

Steve Smith has talked about being asked to use a thin *K* Zildjian ride with



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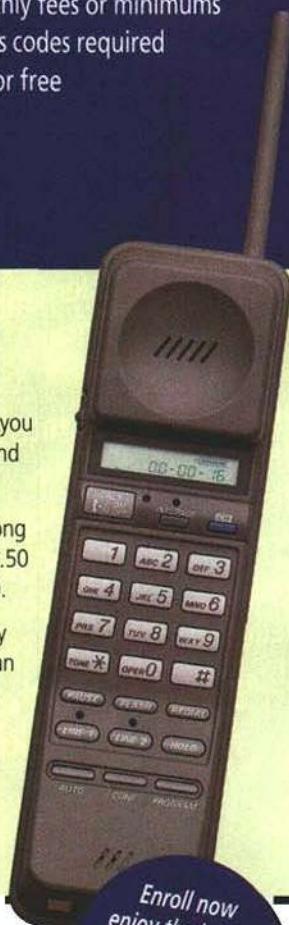
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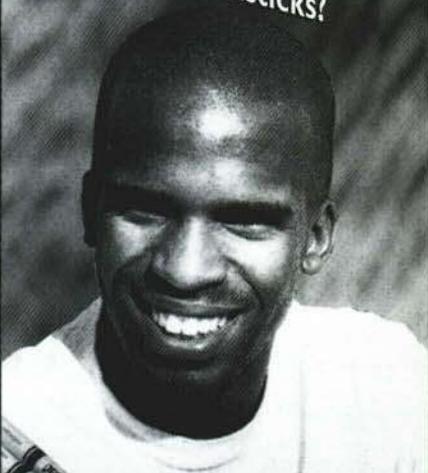
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Mike Manieri's band, a requirement that he says forced him to develop "touch." Touch can give new life to old cymbals, and, like Steve, most drummers will find that time spent riding on thinner cymbals is time well spent. The hands will eventually absorb the capacity to keep the spread and overtones in check.

Chris McCann, who teaches drumset at McGill University, suggests his students play ride with a brush for an hour a day. "Normally when you ride, you're letting the stick do half the work. When you use a brush, instantly you've got to get it off the cymbal. When you stay on the ride, it's very nice, but it has a muffling effect. We're talking a difference of milliseconds, but that point when you get off the cymbal is when you get the full beauty of the ride! Experiment using more or less brush contact on the cymbal, and that 'dancing' quality on your ride cymbal will improve within two weeks."

## Summary: A Perfect Ride?

What goes around comes around. 1997 could well be a "Year Of The Ride Cymbal" unlike any we've seen since the '60s. Drummers are exploring the bumpy surface with renewed vigor. Hey, even Lars Ulrich is back with the big plate.

As Hugo Pinksterboer discovered in the course of writing *The Cymbal Book*, you can place it in columns, but it doesn't always add up. (Isn't it wonderful?) Select a ride. Lay into it, bash it for forty years until the molecules have loosened or tightened up—or whatever they do. Eventually, the sound changes to a point where even Zildjian, Sabian, and Paiste can shake hands in a unanimous conclusion: The thing is "played out." It has gotten tired and has lost something along the way. Ah, but the story is far from over. Drop it off at a pawn shop, and it becomes the pride and joy of a wandering jazz drummer scouring the earth for "the perfect ride."

The Alan Whites and the Butch Vigs are bringing back the washy, large-diameter cymbals of the past. Thanks to these and other contemporary players, and to the jazzers who stayed with it, a whole generation's time feel has been freed from the closed hats of the electronic era. The ride cymbal, very much the link with the fertile musical tradition of yesteryear, has

returned. Cymbalsmiths are working as we speak to re-create the texture and feel of the cymbals of a bygone era—and on new sounds for the future.

It would be easy to dismiss it all with, "It ain't the meat, it's the motion"; the individual, not the instrument. Keith Jarrett is going to sound like Keith on an apartment-sized upright. And Adam Nussbaum on a clinic tour playing *A Customs* would still be Adam Nussbaum. But Steinway is still working on better pianos despite the revelation, and goodness knows cymbal R&D will not shut down; the challenge is to "second guess" how their instruments will be perceived and stroked by anonymous consumers.

"For a lot of drummers," reflects Dan Barker, "the ride cymbal is very personal to them. And when you talk about drummers who are noted for their ride sounds—Peter Erskine, Jack DeJohnette—you're talking about a lot of people liking those sounds. But what you have to remember is that those players have a certain technique with which they get their sound out of those cymbals. The truth of the matter is that most drummers don't have that same technique or skill level, so if we get a request for a certain sound, we have to go back to the drawing table and compensate for that. I mean, very few people can do what Jack can do with cymbals!"

At the end of the day, the drama unfolds exactly as it did fifty years ago, long after the last hammer bites the anvil. It's what the player telegraphs into the ride. "It doesn't matter if you look hard and find a gold mine," says Jon Christensen. "What counts is the *drummer* who plays that cymbal." (Just in case the opposite is true, though, trumpet player Wallace Roney has a collection of Tony Williams' old rides—*those* rides, as in our opening parable—for his drummers to use on recordings. And don't go phoning him; he's not selling!)

Ding, ding-a-ding. It don't mean a thing if it ain't got it. By all means, search forever for the right cymbal, the right feeling under the stick, and the right timbre. Get to know it. And when you do, remember a word from someone sadder and wiser: Please, don't leave it in your trunk.



# NEW FROM THE PUBLISHERS OF MODERN DRUMMER

## DRUM INSTRUCTORS ONLY

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR SERIOUS DRUM TEACHERS • VOL. 1, NO. 1 • OCTOBER 1996

### 14 Tips For The Responsible Teacher

by Ken Vogel

A drum instructor, we must be aware of our responsibilities to our students. Here are some tips that have helped me to better help my students:

1) Set a good example, especially in attitude, appearance, enthusiasm, and discipline. Be on time and the student will be on time. Expect the same from your students.

2) If a student wants to learn material faster than you can teach it, add support and encouragement.

3) If a student wants to learn material slower than you can teach it, provide more time.

4) If a student wants to learn material at the same pace as you, then teach it at that pace.

5) Encourage your student's goals with him, and explain how "I" help him.

### Drumming Up Business

by Stephan S. Nigrochian

**M**anaging a private teaching business can be both fulfilling and financially rewarding for a teacher. Fortunately, there are many ways you can locate students regardless of age, gender, or past experience. One option is to put together a鼓 practice or rock band to expand an already existing business. Furthermore, most of these methods are inexpensive, considering the number of additional students and revenue they can generate.

As with any serious business, it's important to be prepared with the tools of the trade to make the job easier and afford your potential students the best possible service. Make sure the material is well understood and clearly explained. Make sure your students fully understand the concepts you're teaching. Make sure your students are given examples of how the material sounds in a musical situation. Make sure your students show that you've opened their minds to new ideas and concepts related to the musical lesson and instrument of your choice.

For more information on these methods of drumming up business go to [Continued on page 3](#)

IN THIS ISSUE...	
14 Tips For The Responsible Teacher	1
Drumming Up Business	1
Beginning And Ending The Lesson	2
Screening Students	3
Finding A Voice	4
Playing For Students	5
Forward Progress	6
New Materials	7

# DRUM INSTRUCTORS ONLY

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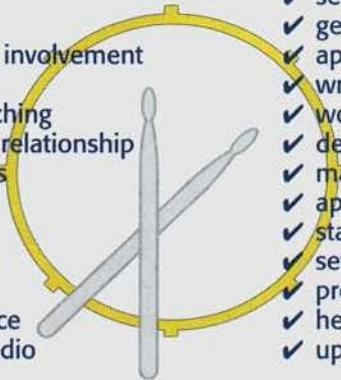
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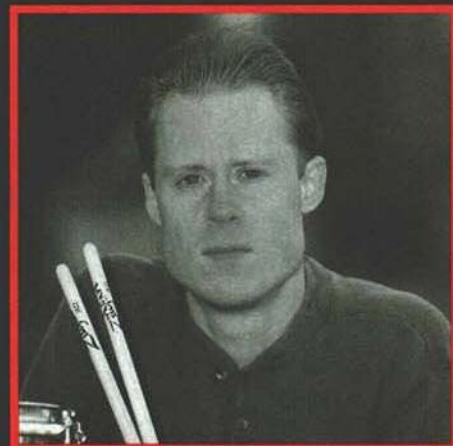
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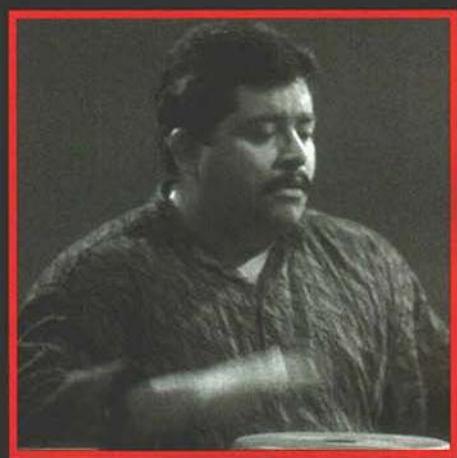


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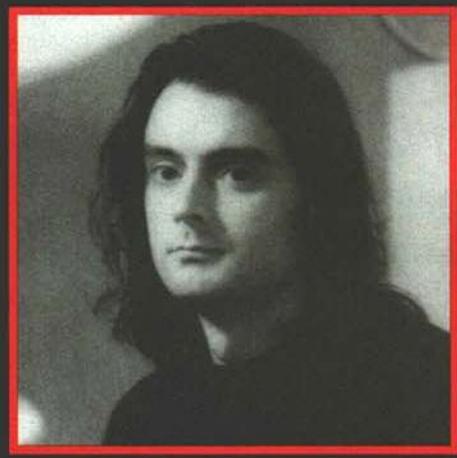
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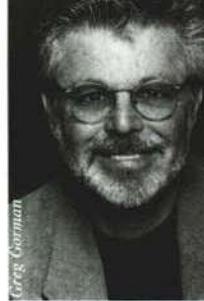
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# Put Your Hands And Feet Together

by Ralph Humphrey

## MUSIC KEY



In my article "Groupings, Tempos, And Stickings" (November '96), I outlined a procedure for the creation of rhythmic ideas or phrases, which, in turn, were applied to the drumset in a variety of ways. Since the topic we will be covering in this month is directly related to those materials, let's review the essentials of that article.

In order for you to derive the most benefit from a rhythmic idea, it is essential to discover the options you have for the development of that idea. An idea is a motif, a figure, a sequence, a short phrase, etc. that has some kind of shape and tempo. I like to think that the components of an idea are:

1. a *grouping* of two or more notes
2. a *tempo* or *pace* that expresses the grouping using one or more note values
3. an *orchestration* that gives the idea its shape by using *accents* and *timbres* (tonal colors)
4. *stickings* that are applied as needed to help give the idea its shape.

Once an idea is established, it can be applied in some sort of larger metric or non-metric structure, usually a phrase one to several measures long.

The focus of this article is to show how two- and three-note groupings (which include the feet) can combine to create virtually any linear grouping, and then be applied to any note value in any metric structure.

## Two-Note Groups

Below are all of the two-note groups that combine the hands and feet:

Four pairs of two-note groups labeled a, b, c, and d. Group a: H-H (left foot), H-B (right hand). Group b: H-H (right foot), H-B (left hand). Group c: H-D (left foot), D-H (right hand). Group d: H-D (right foot), D-H (left hand).

Stickings and applied accents will result from the way you choose to orchestrate these ideas on the set. In addition, any note represented as a foot stroke can be played by either the left or right foot in some alternate fashion. The left foot can be applied to the hi-hat or a second bass drum. You should never feel limited to a "one-way approach."

Here are some options for combining the above two-note groups in a 4/4 metric structure:

1. Choose one pattern and cycle it.
2. Choose two patterns and apply a sticking and foot approach to the chosen orchestration. You now have a four-note group.
3. Choose three patterns and apply a sticking and foot approach to

the chosen orchestration. This creates a six-note group.

4. Choose four patterns, which may involve using one pattern more than once, and apply a sticking and foot approach to the chosen orchestration. You now have an eight-note group.
5. When using more than one group, mix them by reordering the sequence. For example, six-note groups can be created using the following two-note groups: abc, bed, cda, dab; abd, bca, cdb, dac; acd, bda, cad, dba; acb, bdc, cbd, dca; adc, bac, cab, dbc; adb, bad, cha, deb. Of course, you are free to use a group more than once in any sequence, which creates a *multitude* of additional possibilities (that I choose not to list at this time!).

Study the following orchestrated examples. This first one is a 16th-note, four-note group using a and c:

Drum notation example showing a 16th-note, four-note group using groups a and c. The notation shows a continuous sequence of eighth-note strokes on the hi-hat (H) and bass drum (B), with accents placed on specific notes to indicate sticking and foot application.

This example has the same groups, but with a different orchestration, sticking, and accent application.

Drum notation example showing a 16th-note, four-note group using groups a and c with a different sticking and accent application. The notation shows a continuous sequence of eighth-note strokes on the hi-hat (H) and bass drum (B), with accents placed on specific notes to indicate sticking and foot application.

Here are groups a and c as an 8th-note triplet groove:

Drum notation example showing groups a and c as an 8th-note triplet groove. The notation shows a continuous sequence of eighth-note strokes on the hi-hat (H) and bass drum (B), with accents placed on specific notes to indicate sticking and foot application.

This is a six-note grouping using d, b, and a applied as a fill:

Drum notation example showing a six-note grouping using d, b, and a applied as a fill. The notation shows a continuous sequence of eighth-note strokes on the hi-hat (H), bass drum (B), and second bass drum (D), with accents placed on specific notes to indicate sticking and foot application.

Here's the same grouping played as a groove pattern:

Drum notation example showing the same grouping as a groove pattern. The notation shows a continuous sequence of eighth-note strokes on the hi-hat (H), bass drum (B), and second bass drum (D), with accents placed on specific notes to indicate sticking and foot application.

Of course there are many possible applications and orchestrations. When choosing a grouping combination and its orchestration, consider the style of music that you are applying it to and the effect that you are trying to achieve. Above all, be creative and musical.

### Three-Note Groups

Below are all of the examples of three-note groups that combine the hands and feet:

As before, the stickings, foot approach, and accent application will result from the manner in which you choose to orchestrate the ideas on the set.

Here are some options for combining the above three-note groups:

1. Choose one group and cycle it using a note value and a sticking and foot approach.
2. Choose two groups to create a six-note phrase and cycle it using a note value, sticking, and foot approach.
3. Choose three groups to create a nine-note phrase, etc.
4. Choose four groups to create a twelve-note phrase, etc.

Choosing more groups may result in longer, over-the-bar phrases, or the combined groups may be applied to a meter other than 4/4. Odd meters and over-the-bar extended phrases will be topics for future *Modern Drummer* articles.

When using more than one group, mix them and reorder the sequence. I will not attempt to list the possible combinations at this time. (I'll leave that to you.) Meanwhile, the examples that follow show some possible approaches using three-note groups.

This is a six-note phrase using c and d:

Here's a twelve-note phrase using c, e, b, and e:

This is a nine-note phrase using c, g, and d:

The following is a twelve-note phrase as a fill, using a, g, b, and e:

The final example requires some explanation. It uses one group (b) and extends it in a two-bar-fill idea. The note value, however, shifts as the phrase unfolds, creating a feeling of acceleration as the note values grow smaller. This technique, known as "diminution," will also be a topic for a future article.

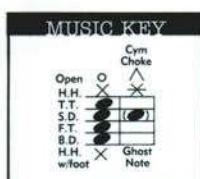
I predict that this discussion will whet your appetite for further experimentations of your own. Have fun with it, and good luck!

*Ralph Humphrey is a highly respected performer, educator, and author. He has performed and recorded with Don Ellis, Frank Zappa, Al Jarreau, Wayne Shorter, Manhattan Transfer, and many others. Ralph is also the co-chairman of the drum program at the Los Angeles Music Academy.*



# Steve Gadd: "Antigua Boy"

Transcribed by Matt Kern



**MUSIC KEY**

Open	O	Gym Choke
H.H.	X	X
T.T.		
S.D.	( )	
F.T.		
B.D.		
H.H. w/foot	X	Ghost Note

This month's *Drum Soloist* features another great performance by Steve Gadd, this one from Terumasu Hino's 1980 release, *Daydream*. Steve's solo begins with a display of fine rudimental technique, which is such an identifiable signature of his playing. In the fourth measure he plays a brief three-against-two pattern that leads into a very tasteful over-the-bar triplet lick.

In the ninth measure Gadd begins his theme for the second half of the solo. Then in the tenth and twelfth measures he plays a linear sextuple! figure with the last note of the sextuplet played on the bass drum. Steve builds to the end with the theme he started in the ninth measure, but plays the three-against-two pattern over the next three measures. He then finishes this short but tasty solo with a traditional tag that brings in the rest of the band.



Elizabeth Roberts

A musical score for a single player on a staff. The score includes a metronome marking of 144 BPM. The music features various dynamics such as >, >>, >>>, and 3, and performance instructions like R R L, R R L, and R R. The score is divided into four staves, each with a different rhythmic pattern and dynamic markings.

9

LLR    LLR    LLR    RRLRR

LLR    LLR    LLR    RRLRR

LLR    LLR    LLR    RRLRR

LLR    LLR    LLR    RRLRR



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# Ahmir-Khalib Thompson: Do You Want More?

by Johnny Rabb



Mpozi Collective



## "Proceed"

This first example is the basic groove from the track. Notice the broken-up bass drum pattern along with the straight hi-hat. When you sit down to play this, remember to swing the bass drum part.

$\text{♩} = 85$

Here is a variation Thompson plays during the verse:

Check out the bass drum pattern played during the chorus:

## "Distortion To The Static"

The next example is taken from the intro of "Distortion." The first measure of the tune starts with an amazing one-bar fill utilizing straight 8th notes on the hats and swung 16ths on the bass drum. The main groove of the song (which follows the intro below) is an incredibly funky two-bar loop.

$\text{♩} = 88$

## "Do You Want More?"

The next two examples are played as one-bar loops. These are great to practice because they help you focus on keeping your groove consistent. Discipline yourself to keep the bar looping over and over. Here's the basic groove:

$\text{♩} = 95$

Here's a variation:

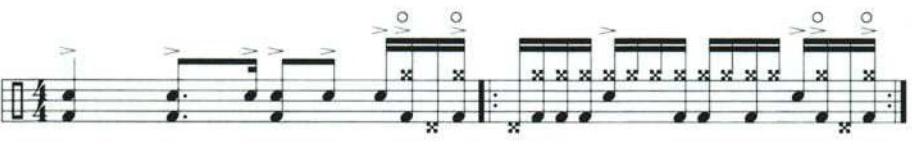


### "Datskat"

This beat is more of a Clyde Stubblefield "Funky Drummer" groove. It's actually played with a straight 16th-note feel. Ahmir really puts this one in the pocket! Check it out. This is the main groove:



Here is a nice one-bar fill that Ahmir plays leading into the chorus groove:



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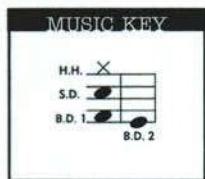
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# Four-Over-Three Ostinato

by Ken Vogel



Ostinatos have become quite popular among many of today's drum soloists. Performing a continuous pattern with one or more limbs while soloing with the remaining ones can be musically challenging and fun. The ostinato presented here is based on a four-over-three polyrhythm played between two bass drums. Bass drum #1 plays four evenly spaced beats per measure

while bass drum #2 plays three evenly spaced notes. (All of the musical examples and solos in this article may be practiced by substituting the hi-hat for bass drum #2.) The hands play a variety of patterns over the top of the ostinato.

Let's begin by developing a feel for the four-over-three double bass ostinato. Here it is:



Now let's play a simple solo over the top of the ostinato. Practice the following sixteen bars by taking one measure at a time. Then practice four measures at a time. Finally, take on the entire solo.

You can play the previous solo with different ride patterns. Try the solo again using any of these ride variations:

The image shows four different ride patterns for a snare drum in 3/4 time. Pattern a) consists of vertical strokes. Pattern b) has two strokes per measure. Pattern c) has three strokes per measure. Pattern d) has four strokes per measure.

The next examples have a 3/8-over-3/4 feel. The hand pattern appears twice in one measure. The first utilizes the sticking of the "para-diddle-diddle." Once you're comfortable with the stickings, try moving the hand patterns to different drums. (Doing this will give you some interesting tonal combinations.)

This is a drum sheet music example in 3/4 time. It features a combination of 3/8 and 3/4 measures. The top line shows hand patterns (R L R R, L L R L, etc.) and the bottom line shows bass drum patterns. Measures 1-4 are in 3/8, followed by a bar line, then measures 5-8 are in 3/4.

Here's an eight-measure exercise that expands on the previous example.

This is an eight-measure exercise in 3/4 time. It starts with a 3/8-over-3/4 feel, followed by a 3/4 section. The top line shows hand patterns, and the bottom line shows bass drum patterns. The exercise is divided into two parts: 1. and 2., each consisting of four measures.

The snare phrasing in the following exercise gives the impression of 4/4 rock.

This is a snare drum part in 3/4 time. It features a steady eighth-note pattern that creates a 4/4 rock feel. The pattern is divided into two sections of four measures each.

The following ride rhythm is phrased in 3/16.

This is a ride cymbal pattern in 3/4 time, phrased in 3/16. It consists of sixteenth-note patterns grouped in threes, creating a triplet feel. The pattern is divided into two sections of three measures each.

Once you're comfortable with this ride pattern, go back and apply it to the sixteen-bar solo. You can also try it with these snare drum variations:

a)

b)

c)

d)

This last solo features a variety of rhythms played on the snare drum. Be sure to observe the accents and dynamics—try to make *music* with this piece.

The sheet music consists of six staves of musical notation for marimba or xylophone. The key signature is A major (no sharps or flats). The time signature is common time (indicated by '4'). The first staff begins with a dynamic of *mf*. The second staff begins with *p*, followed by *f*. The third staff begins with *p*, followed by *f*. The fourth staff begins with *mf*. The fifth staff begins with *p*, followed by *f*. The sixth staff begins with *mf*. The notation includes various note heads (solid black, open, and cross-hatched) and rests, with several grace notes indicated by short vertical strokes above the main notes. Measure numbers 1 through 12 are present at the beginning of each staff.



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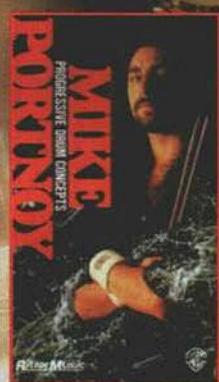
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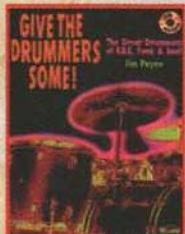
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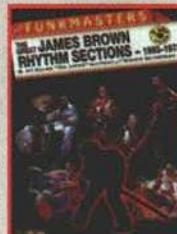
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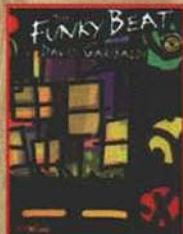
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# The Drummer As Recording Artist

## Part 1: Sales & Promotion

by Hal Howland

**F**or a moment, forget about being a Sideman. During the course of this six-part series, you, the drummer, are the boss! Over the coming issues we will examine your role as recording artist, not only playing in, but leading the band, perhaps writing the music, and recording under your own name. We'll look at all phases of the process, exemplified by the experiences of drummers (including myself) who have been there.

### Introduction

One of the first questions you should ask is, Should you sign with a label or form your own? Advantages of being signed to a major label include (1) the exposure and prestige that come with such an association; (2) the moral and perhaps financial support a label can provide to keep you as an emerging artist from drowning in a fiercely competitive field; and (3) the insulation a signed artist enjoys from the daily concerns of business. Disadvantages include (1) a partial loss of copyright ownership; (2) a possible loss of creative control; (3) the insecurity of being the newest and perhaps least important name on a roster of artists competing for a label management's personal and financial resources; and (4) the fear of surrendering your future to an uncaring corporation (kind of like having a day job). A recently signed artist with a hit record may become fabulously wealthy and enjoy the undying love of a grateful nation. A recently signed artist without a hit record may be better off as an independent.

Signed or not, you will see no money from your recordings until you have repaid the costs of making and promoting them. A record company, whether it is a multinational conglomerate or housed in a one-car garage, cannot survive if it loses money. (Saxophonist and Coltrane scholar Andrew White, probably the most prolific

self-produced artist in jazz history, expresses his sales philosophy this way: "I'm not in the trophy business.") Even famous drummers have difficulty getting (and staying) signed as leaders. The bankable Phil Collins (Warner Bros.), known today primarily as a singer, heads a short list of drummers on major labels, including Ginger Baker, Harvey Mason (both Atlantic), Max Roach and Bill Stewart, (both Blue Note), and Charlie Watts (Virgin). Famous drummers gracing smaller labels include Louie Bellson (Concord), Bill Bruford (Editions EG), Jack DeJohnette (ECM, Impulse), Peter Erskine (Denon, ECM, and his own new label), Roy Haynes (Dreyfus), and Elvin Jones (Enja). Many superb drummers, all household names to an *MD* reader, compose the C list. (The biggest name of all time, Ringo Starr, is resting comfortably on the Private Music label.) As a new artist you probably will have to finance your own recordings, release and promote them yourself, store them in your home, and give away more copies than you will ever sell. Your recordings may have more value as elements of your press kit than as commercial products.

A surprising number of players encounter old prejudices when shopping a recording project. Many label executives continue to feel that drummers are second-class musicians and therefore not credible leaders; that their recordings are likely to feature rhythm and interminable soloing at the expense of melody, harmony, and front-line sex appeal; and that marketing a drummer's recording to a public with perhaps even less respect for the rhythm section is not worth the trouble. (A famous drummer who has been fired by a renowned band or leader may be in a worse marketing position than an unknown player with a "clean record.") But you may well enjoy the opposite experience. Write or select good tunes, bring in a good band, and communicate confident professionalism; there is no reason why you should be compared unfavorably to that week's latest David Sanborn clone.

You may envision your recording project artistically and chronologically: writing the music, rehearsing the band, recording the music, designing the album cover, ordering the CDs, and waiting eagerly to greet the UPS driver. Maybe you have given less attention to the less attractive details of business. But without careful

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planning before recording and extreme perseverance afterward, you are likely to end up with a basement full of unsold CDs. Consider a more realistic order of activities: sales, promotion, business, copyrights, design, printing, recording, and manufacturing.



You must perform live if you hope to sell your recording in significant numbers. (Conversely, you must have released a recording to land attractive gigs.) Most gigs on the original-music circuit pay ridiculously low wages, and presenters expect you to provide an audience. (This insulting situation will remain a fact of life so long as every amateur in the country has access to recording technology.) Put the press, disc jockeys, record retailers, and distributors on your guest list. Advertise in publications that reach your target audience.

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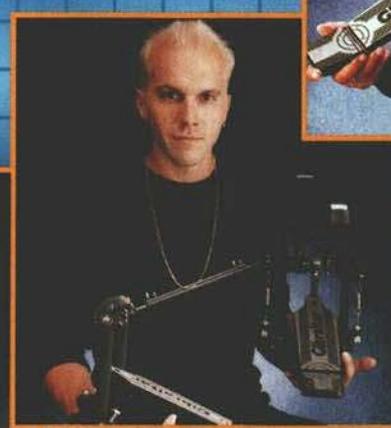
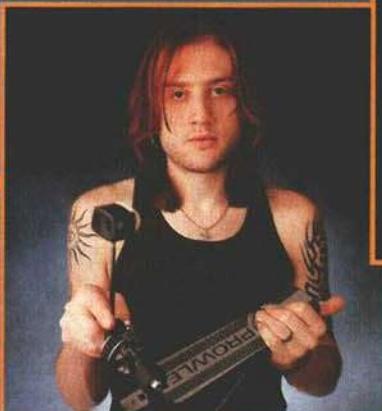
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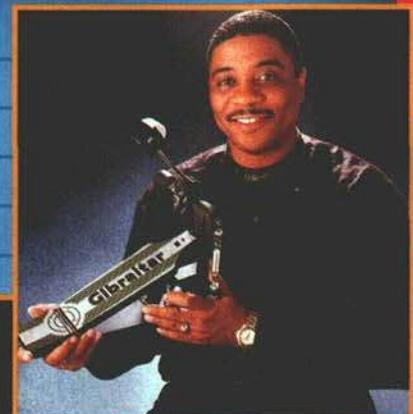
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so long as it is not a grainy smokefest taped at the local community college by a wedding-band agency. Other promotional materials include fliers, banners, postcards, mail-order forms, and calendars—all of which can do more harm than good if not professionally and tastefully rendered.

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In Part 2 we'll look at business and copyrights.



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# A Century Of Innovations

by Cheech Iero

The drumset as we know it is less than a century old. Yet within that brief time span, innovations in drum design flourished as manufacturers struggled to keep up with the ever-changing needs and tastes of drummers. Here's a quick backward glance at a few of the items offered since the drumset first hit the scene. Some of them still exist in varied forms. Some proved to be nothing more than a passing fad. But they're *all* a kick to look back on.

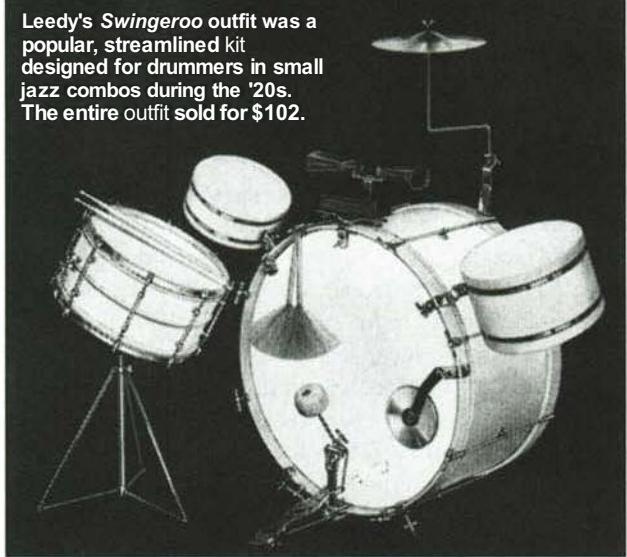
*The National "full dress" outfit, by Leedy, offered a sharp appearance with sparkling diamond decorations of gold and red on glossy black duco shells. Note the gold-inlaid bass drum hoops.*



Designed for the drummer "on the go," the Leedy Rollaway Trap Console was made of tubular steel and rolled on and off like a vibraphone. The locking wheels were said to keep the outfit firmly in place.



*Leedy's Swingeroo outfit was a popular, streamlined kit designed for drummers in small jazz combos during the '20s. The entire outfit sold for \$102.*



*Ludwig proudly introduced its Worlds Fair model 7x14 snare drum in 1939.*



*Radio King drums, named for their popularity on live radio broadcasts, became a best-seller for the Slingerland Drum Company during the '30s.*

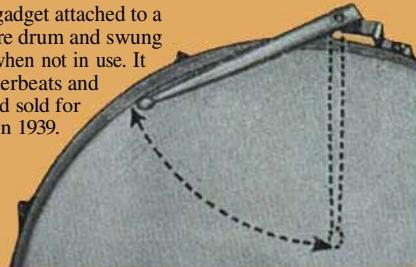
## Mixed Bag

If all the old—"new" drumset stuff catches your eye, yesteryear's plethora of drum accessory and specialty items—some of which, at least in retrospect, seem a bit wacky—will surely boggle your mind. A few are so cool they make you wonder why they ever went away. Others—well, imagine how you've gotten along without...

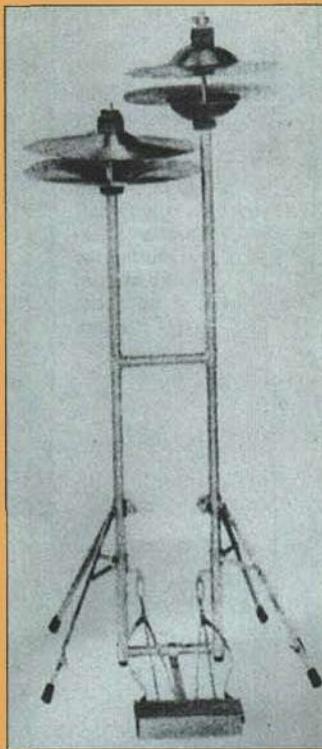


Creating rumbles, rolls, and roars was easy with *Rumble Tips*. This novel item could create numerous effects when its rubber tips were dragged across a snare, tom, or bass drum head.

The *Kim Shot* gadget attached to a lug on the snare drum and swung out of the way when not in use. It was used for afterbeats and accents and sold for 75 cents in 1939.



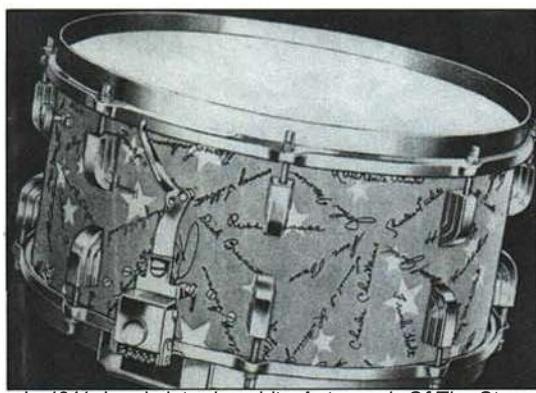
Calf heads presented quite a headache for drummers at one time. Electric heaters that altered the humidity were the answer. Inserted through the drum's air hole, they kept the heads tight and snappy in the dampest of weather.



The *Twin Hi-Hat* pedal, by Leedy, operated separately or together. One set of cymbals could be used for footwork, while the other could handle stick patterns—an obvious forerunner of today's remote hi-hats.



Sonny Greer, with the Duke Ellington band during the '30s and '40s, was famous for his extensive Leedy setup. His "SG" initials were inlaid into every drum.



In 1941, Leedy introduced its *Autograph Of The Stars* pyralin finish. The series featured white stars and signatures of company endorsers on a blue background.



Not to be outdone, Ludwig & Ludwig offered the *Top Hat* outfit, which included notes, top hats, canes, and gloves on a marine pearl background.

This Billy Gladstone kit from the '50s had clamping lugs, a drum key holder, and an internal muffler for the bottom floor tom head.



Made in Hamburg, Germany in the '50s and '60s (and affiliated with Vox between 1965 and 1967), Trixon was known for its unconventionally shaped bass drums, such as the one in this Speedfire kit.

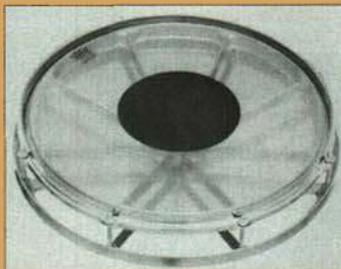
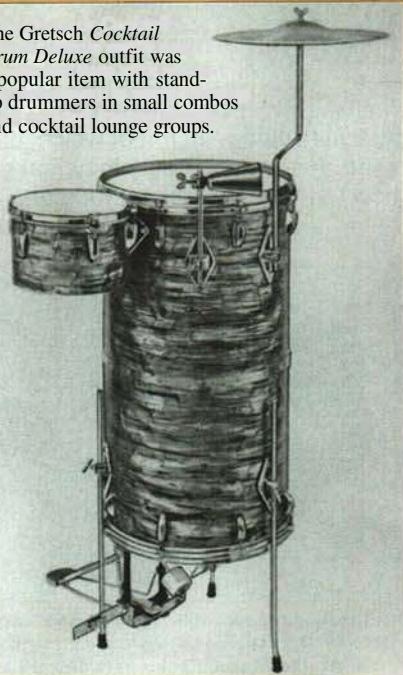


This combination stick and non-retractable brush was designed primarily for quick changes between sticks and brushes.

Pearl's Van-Pitch looked like a RotoTom, but it attached to a conventional drum shell. Turning the top adjusted the distance between the head and the shell, altering the pitch and resonance of the drum.



The Gretsch Cocktail Drum Deluxe outfit was a popular item with stand-up drummers in small combos and cocktail lounge groups.



Originally created in 1968, Remo's Rototoms came in 6" through 18" diameters. A turn of the drum offered quick tuning changes, and a set of seven had an extended range of around 3½ octaves. Rototoms were a popular addition to the drummer's arsenal during the '70s.



Ventrasonic's Acousti-Chamber was installed *inside* the snare drum. The clear, plastic chamber funneled the air column directly toward the area where the snares met the bottom head, and was said to eliminate dead spots and increase sensitivity.

During the '70s, when single-headed drums became popular, Camco offered this 6-ply rock maple kit.





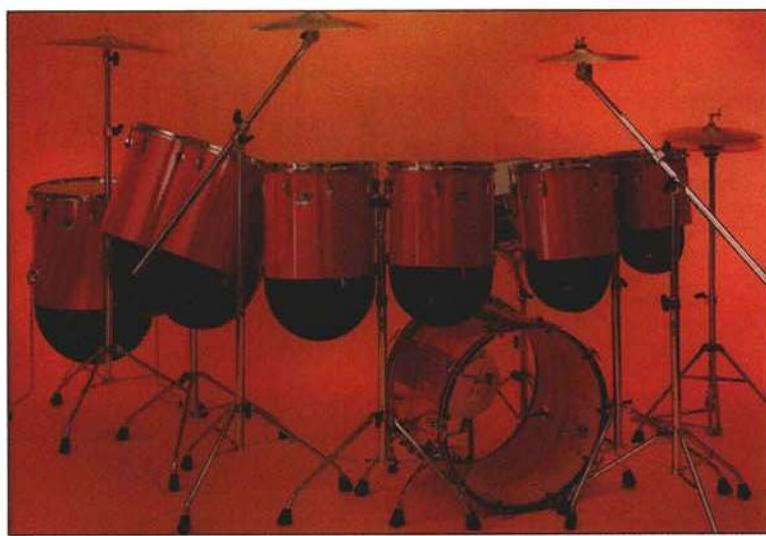
Tama's clear acrylic *Octobans* could be tuned to various pitches, and offered drummers still more tonal colors.



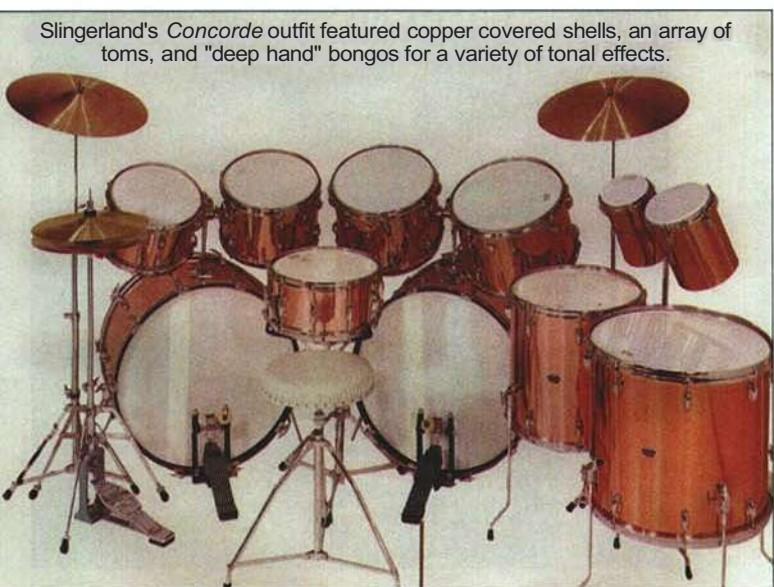
Later in the '70s, Slingerland added extra visual impact and sound enhancement to their concert toms with the patented *Cut-A-Way* design.



The *Hollywood Multi-Sound* tom-tom was a standard-size floor tom engineered to react like a timpani. The tuning mechanism provided smooth tensioning of the batter head, enabling the drummer to change tuning and lock into different tones. Produced in Italy, the *Hollywood Multi-Sound* faded from the scene about as fast as it had appeared.



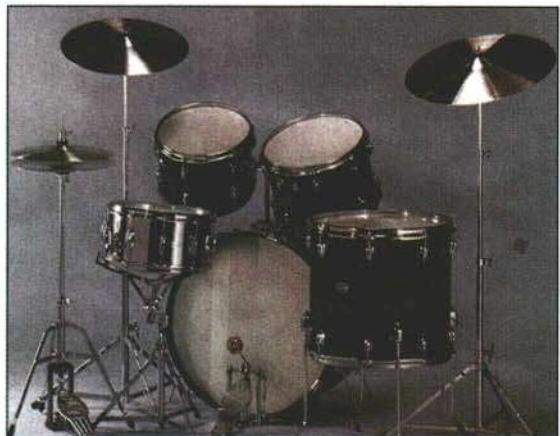
With single-headed concert and power toms in fashion in the 70s, Ludwig's *Sound Projector* outfit became the logical means of bouncing the sound straight out to the audience.



Slingerland's *Concorde* outfit featured copper covered shells, an array of toms, and "deep hand" bongos for a variety of tonal effects.



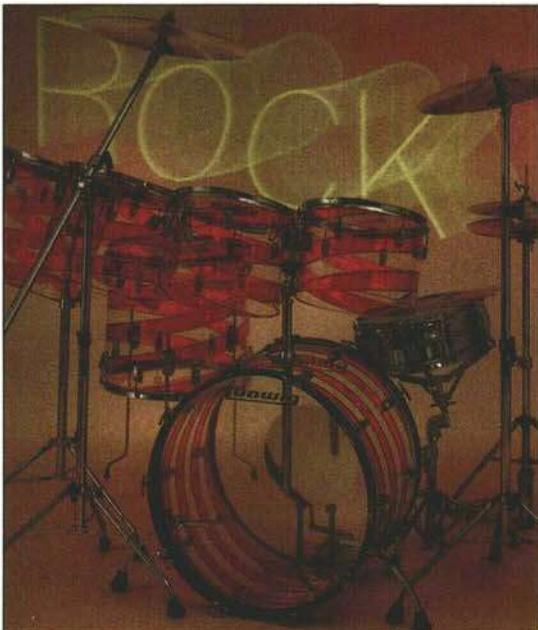
In 1977, this Gretsch *Broadcaster II Mt* with 6-ply, laminated shells and chrome finish, sold for \$1,195.



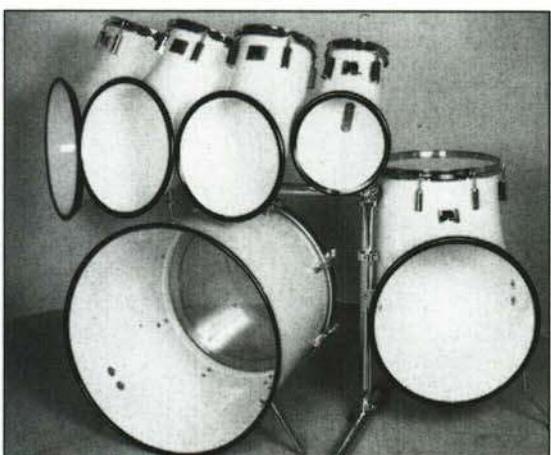
Slingerland was quite an innovator in cosmetics during the mid-'70s. For \$976 you could own the company's *Super Rock* outfit in blue denim.

Ludwig's *Vistalite* drums were a popular item during the late 70s and early '80s.

Available in eight colors and four transparent patterns, the red/clear spiral *Vistalite* pattern shown here was offered on the *Quadra-Plus* kit.



Drummers obsessed with "projection" could appreciate the open look and directional sound characteristics of North drums, which appeared on the scene in 1979.



Staccato was another line that attempted to capitalize on the "projection" concept, though getting the drums into conventional cases presented an obvious challenge.



Slingerland's *Aztec* design was available in brown, red, green, yellow, and white.

Ludwig's *Tivoli* drumset offered a band of tiny lights that sparked through multi-colored *Vistalite* shells. *Tivolis'* popularity quickly diminished when vibrations from normal playing caused the bulbs to break and their thin wiring to fail.



*Editor's note:* The author would like to thank John Aldridge, Harry Cangany, Charlie Donnelly, Ned Ingberman, and Rick Lawton for their assistance.



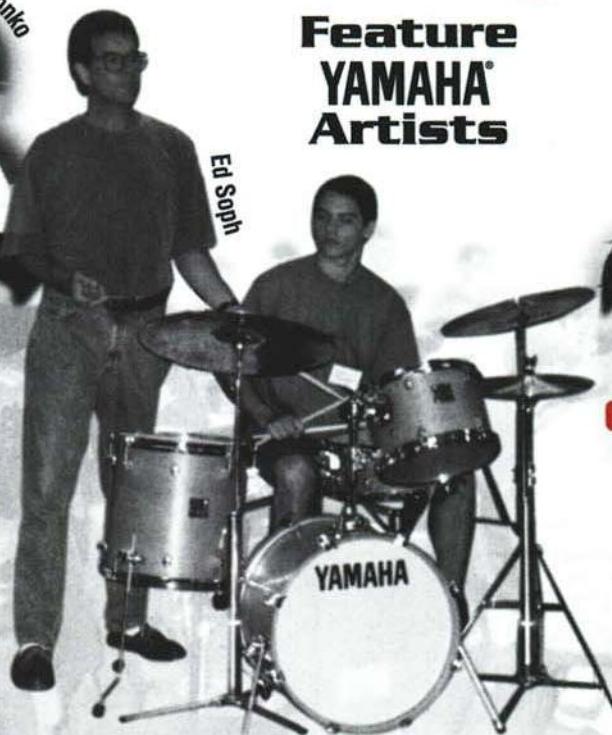
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# Behind The Glass

## Kevin Shirley

by Mark Parsons

Welcome to a new series of articles showcasing the vantage point from the other side of the recording console—"behind the glass." Each installment will feature an interview with a noted producer or recording engineer, with the focus on drumming in the studio (from both the playing and recording standpoints).

This month I talked with Kevin Shirley, who has an impressive resume and a wealth of experience to draw from. Among his many other credits, Kevin produced, engineered, and mixed Silverchair's platinum-selling debut CD, *Frogstomp*, and has worked with Rush, Bon Jovi, Baby Animals, and the Divinyls. He recently produced and mixed the new Journey album, *Trial By Fire*, and when I spoke with him he had just finished producing the upcoming Aerosmith release, *Nine Lives*, which should be on the shelves by the time you read this.

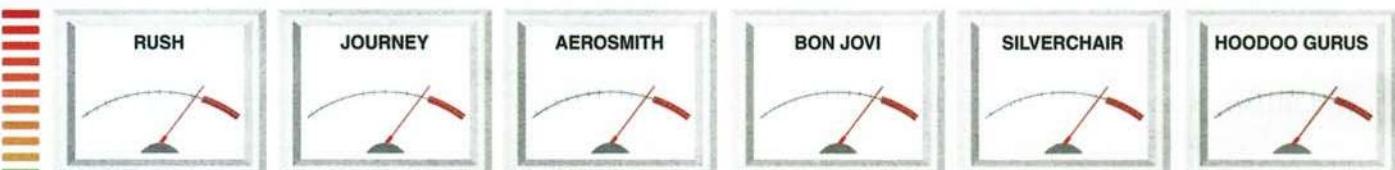
Although associated with a number of highly touted contemporary projects, in some ways Kevin is a throwback. Not only does he prefer analog recorders and vintage Neve consoles for their big, fat sound, but more importantly, he adheres to the philosophy that the *song* and the *band vibe* are more important than achieving a technically pristine recording—and to that end he'll do whatever it takes to capture the feel of a band playing live in the studio. To my ears, at least, it's an approach that works wonderfully.



more important than a lot of fancy fills. The simplicity also comes in the way you set up your kit, and making sure it's well maintained. And if you don't tune very well, don't feel shy about having someone give you a hand tuning your kit.

**MP:** Have you ever suggested that a drummer change his tuning, or anything else about his drums?

**KS:** Oh, yes, very often, because things sound a little different



**MP:** What advice would you give to a young drummer about playing in the studio?

**KS:** I'd say that he needs to play the way he's *comfortable* playing. That won't always work with some producers who may wish to use click tracks or other things. But generally I like to have the drummer play the way he's the most comfortable. So, if you're not used to using click tracks in the studio, either prepare yourself to use them, or make sure your time is okay playing free [without a click].

I also think simplicity is very important. For a new drummer going into the studio I would suggest that you don't overdo your kit. You must realize that the foundation of what you're doing is

when they come out [on playback] from the way they do when you play them. When you sit in front of a snare drum and you bang it, it's got a real crack and it can sound really powerful. But when you put that into the context of a record—because it's a very short sound—it might sound really small. Take a piccolo snare: On a rock song in a live situation it might be loud enough to keep the backbeat going very strongly, but on a record it might sound very small compared to the rest of the track.

**MP:** Do you prefer to use a click when tracking drums, or not?

**KS:** I would say not, but it's totally dependent on the band and the drummer. For example, on the Silverchair record we didn't use a click at all because the drummer was not used to working with it.

What I do like to do is use the click as a reference for where the song is going to start, tempo-wise. That way, if you do a couple of takes and you want to do some edits, at least you're always *starting* from the same tempo.

**MP:** Let's talk about equipment and recording techniques for a minute, starting with drum mic's. What are your preferences?

**KS:** I like the Shure SM57 on snare. I never mike the bottom of the snare, by the way. Sennheiser 427s on toms. You know—regular old stuff. I like to use Neumann U47s on the kick.

**MP:** The FET version?

**KS:** No, I prefer the tube model.

**MP:** So it's outside of the drum, then?

**KS:** Yeah. Joey Kramer had an interesting thing DW had built for him. It's a little kick drum outside the kick drum [*Woofers*]. There was a microphone in it—I don't know what model it was—and we used that for the "air" on the kick drum. It was really cool.

**MP:** Overheads?

**KS:** The small AKGs—the 451s.

**MP:** And out in the room?

**KS:** Mostly Neumanns—U67s, or U87s. I like to get a matched pair.

**MP:** Do you prefer to track drums flat and dry, or do you like to EQ them as you're printing them?

**KS:** I print them EQ'd, but then on the mix things don't change very much.

**MP:** And are you tracking without compression or gates?

**KS:** I rarely use gates, even in the final mix. I think a lot of the energy of drum tracks is in the room mic's and the way they react—that's part of the drum sound.

**MP:** And what about compression?

**KS:** When I mix I use a ton. [laughs] I've got my own little secrets, but it's mainly on the snare to get that big *dooming* in there.

**MP:** And what's your favorite medium for recording drums?

**KS:** Two-inch analog tape at thirty [inches per second] with no noise reduction—that's what I always use.

**MP:** You've worked with lots of "name" drummers who have a signature sound. When you're recording these guys, how do you go about getting a sound that works for the particular project at hand, yet still retains their identity?

**KS:** I think the projects speak for themselves. The way I produce is very much about personality anyway, so one of the things I always try to do is maintain the integrity of the band so you can identify all the players. This is where I'm coming from. For example, I used to love that guy in Deep Purple—you know, the one with the glasses?

**MP:** Ian Paice.

**KS:** Yeah. I used to *love* the way he sounded, and I loved the way Bonham sounded. Those guys had such a signa-

## Track Record

**Rush**—engineered *Counterparts*

**Journey**—produced and mixed *Trial By Fire*

**Aerosmith**—produced new release, *Mne Lives*

**Bon Jovi**—recorded single "Always"

**Silverchair**—produced, engineered, and mixed

*Frogstomp*

**Ammonia**—produced forthcoming album, *Mint 400*

Additional producing credits:

**Mortal Sin**

**Peter Wells**

Additional mixing credits:

**Baby Animals**

**The Divinyls**

**Lime Spiders**

**Screaming Jets**

**Margaret Urlich**

**Hoodoo Gurus**

**Billy Squire**

**Material Issue**

ture—that was *them*, that was their personality that made them play the way they did, and made the albums sound the way they did. So I'm very much into the personality of the music being dictated by each performer, and then making *that* work within the confines of the band.

**MP:** Do you usually go for keepers, or do you....

**KS:** [interrupts excitedly] Oh, yes—always!

**MP:** Of the entire band?

**KS:** Oh, yes. We go for vocals, we go for guitar, we go for bass. Very often I'll edit tracks around the performance of other instruments and sometimes even compromise them just to get the best *band* performance. Take the Journey album. Ross Valory is such an interesting bass player that if he made a mistake I'd rather edit in that same piece from another take than punch in the bass, to keep as much of the live take as possible. I've always believed there's a certain cohesiveness there that you don't get anywhere else.

Even the Journey song "When You Love A Woman"—which is a big, soft ballad—is exciting to me because *everything* on that track is from one live take. The whole thing was the band playing together, and I think it adds a special magic to the song.

**MP:** Of all the different drummers you've recorded, which ones did you enjoy working with the most, and why?

**KS:** [long pause] Interesting question. Charlie Drayton was great, with the Divinyls. It was a strange project, but he

"The recorded sound almost doesn't matter, because the vibe is more important. There are lots of songs with incredible drum sounds, and lots of great songs with bad drum sounds."

was great. Neil Peart was very interesting—he's a great drummer. He had this desire to record on digital—which was strange for me—because he likes a really bright drum sound. I thought the drum sound got a little small on that Rush album because it was so "digital."

**MP:** This was *Counterparts*!

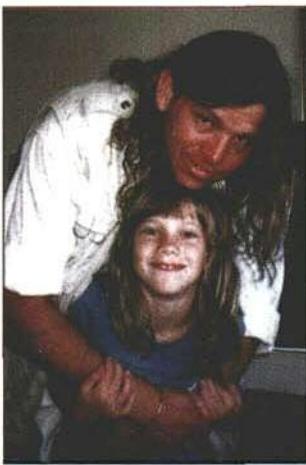
**KS:** Yeah. I tried to "analog" it, but they weren't having any. [laughs]

Tico Torres is a great drummer. I did some Bon Jovi stuff and he was great, and real easy to work with.

I recorded the Baby Animals' first album—a great drummer there, too. We did that at Bearsville studio in New York. If you listen to that album, that's the most live sound. I mean there are no gates or compression—*nothing* on those drums. Just the straight-up kit.

**MP:** Anybody else?

**KS:** Steve Smith is a very cool drummer. He's got a whole bag of tricks—great chops. And Joey—he's amazing to watch, because he has the most interesting interaction between his snare drum and his hi-hats. I mean the *ch-ch-ch-ch*. [sings 8th-note hi-hat part] Nobody else plays the hi-hat like Joey Kramer, it's really amazing. It's like Bonham—no one has that foot thing that Bonham had, the way he played the kick and snare, and Joey's got the same thing with his hat and snare. I love that sort of stuff, when you can hear



Kevin with his son Josh, who, at age six, played a "messy" drum solo that was used on the intro of "Find Away" on Silverchair's *Frogstomp*

the person coming through. I love it.

**MP:** What sort of attitude adjustment does a drummer have to make when he's making the transition into a professional recording situation?

**KS:** It's a difficult thing for drummers, because you get so used to hearing your kit live. It never has that same power when you go into the control room and hear it through a pair of NS-10s [small monitor speakers]. You really need to be able to just step back and let it go a little—which is a tough thing to do.

**MP:** Are you saying not to worry so much about the recorded sound?

**KS:** No, I think you need to be aware of it, but once you select a producer and assign him control of where you're going, you've shown some degree of faith and confidence in him by going *that* far, so...[pauses while he contemplates]. It's tough to

say. I wouldn't say "back off," but I know a lot of drummers that get very anal, sometimes to the detriment of the song, which is more important. It almost doesn't matter how it sounds. I mean it *does*, but it *almost* doesn't because the vibe is more important. There are lots of bad songs with incredible drum sounds, and lots of great songs with bad drum sounds.

*The author would like to thank Matt Freeman for his assistance in arranging this interview.*



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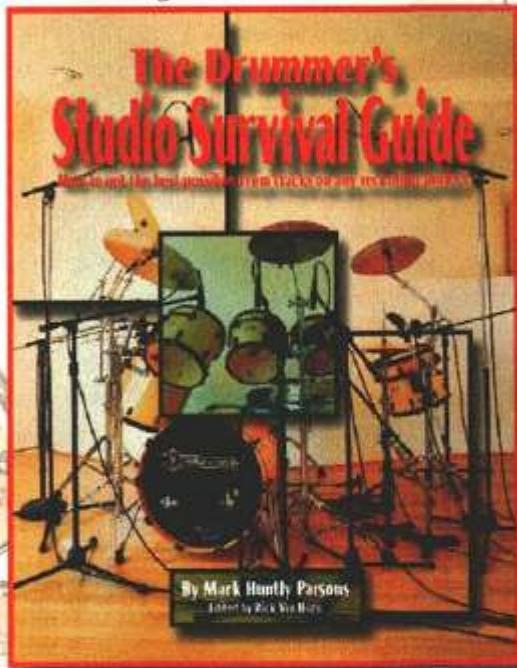
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## Softening An Electronic Kick

I recently purchased a Yamaha DS-10 electronic kit with the intention of using it as a substitute for my acoustic kit when I want to practice in my apartment. On my acoustic kit I tune my bass drum head pretty loose. To replicate this feel as closely as possible on my electronic kit, I placed a  $\frac{1}{2}$ "-thick piece of soft rubber directly on top of the kick tower's existing trigger pad. A few old wristbands served to keep it in place. I then set the trigger level range on the DTX sound module to a more sensitive setting to compensate for the softer impact from all the cushioning. This added a more realistic feel in place of the harsh smack of the electronic kick pad.

Andrew Rudnick  
West Chester, PA

## Trimming Hardware

I'm a six-foot-four-inch male with a thirty-seven-inch reach, but I still find modern hardware to be too tall and heavy. One partial remedy is to remove all excess tubing. This can be accomplished with a minimum number of household tools. All tubing can be easily cut with a hacksaw. After cutting, I usually bevel the outside edge with a regular metal file and the inside edge with a rat-tail file. Some stands have tape on the bottom of the tubes to prevent them from pulling out. Just pull hard, and the tape will come off. I remove all tubing not required for the height I desire. *Be sure to leave enough tubing*, however, for the collar to grip. I usually cut off the larger tube of a cymbal stand, leaving just enough tube for the collar to grip. This saves considerable weight.

You can lower thrones, snare stands, tom stands, etc. by cutting their down tubes. First, remove the collar. Some are only held by friction, while others have a ten-

sion pin inserted. If the stand has a tension pin, remove it by tapping it out, using a nail and a hammer. You should keep the pin to be reinserted, but if it is lost or damaged another can be purchased cheaply at any hardware store. Next, use a piece of wood and a hammer to remove the collar. First, secure the stand. Then place the wood against the collar to prevent scarring, and tap the collar off with the hammer. Remove as much tubing as possible with a hacksaw, leaving the amount required to replace the collar. *Again, be absolutely sure that you leave enough tubing for the stand to fold up!* Replace the collar by holding the stand upright and tapping it into place, using the piece of wood to protect it. After the collar has been replaced, the tension pin can be reinserted by using the hole in the collar as a guide to drill a hole in the tubing. Then simply tap the tension pin back into place.

I have performed this operation on several stands from multiple manufacturers, and so far have not screwed one up. I save a lot of weight and I can lower the stands to where I want them. Good luck!

Alan Gamble  
Kingsport, TN

## Homemade Toe Stops

I recently purchased one single and one double bass drum pedal—neither of which came fitted with toe stops at the end of the footplate. I could, of course, have ordered toe stops (at extra cost, or at least an extra waiting period). Instead, I came up with a quicker and cheaper method of obtaining them. I checked the size of the holes cut into the pedal footplates for the factory toe-stops, then ran down to my local hardware store, where I bought three medium-sized eyebolts (the ones that look like closed off question marks) with matching nuts. I fitted the bolts into the holes in the footplate (eye uppermost, facing my foot), and fixed them in place with a pair of locking nuts apiece. I've been using this arrangement for several months and it has stood up with honors to the rigors of my playing.

Eddie Edmonston  
Dhahran, Saudi Arabia

## Handy Use For Recycled Heads

Here's a time-saving tip for frosty winter mornings. I removed an old, unplayable 22" bass drum head from its rim and cut it into two half-moon shapes. When I park my car at night, I place the half-drumheads under the windshield wipers (leaving the wipers in the "on" position to hold the heads in place). Frost and snow then settle on the heads instead of on the windshield, eliminating the need for scraping in the morning. (I simply lift the head halves from underneath the wipers. This saves me an extra five to ten minutes each morning—helping me get to work on time after being out late at a gig the night before.

Tom Kirk  
Charleston, WV

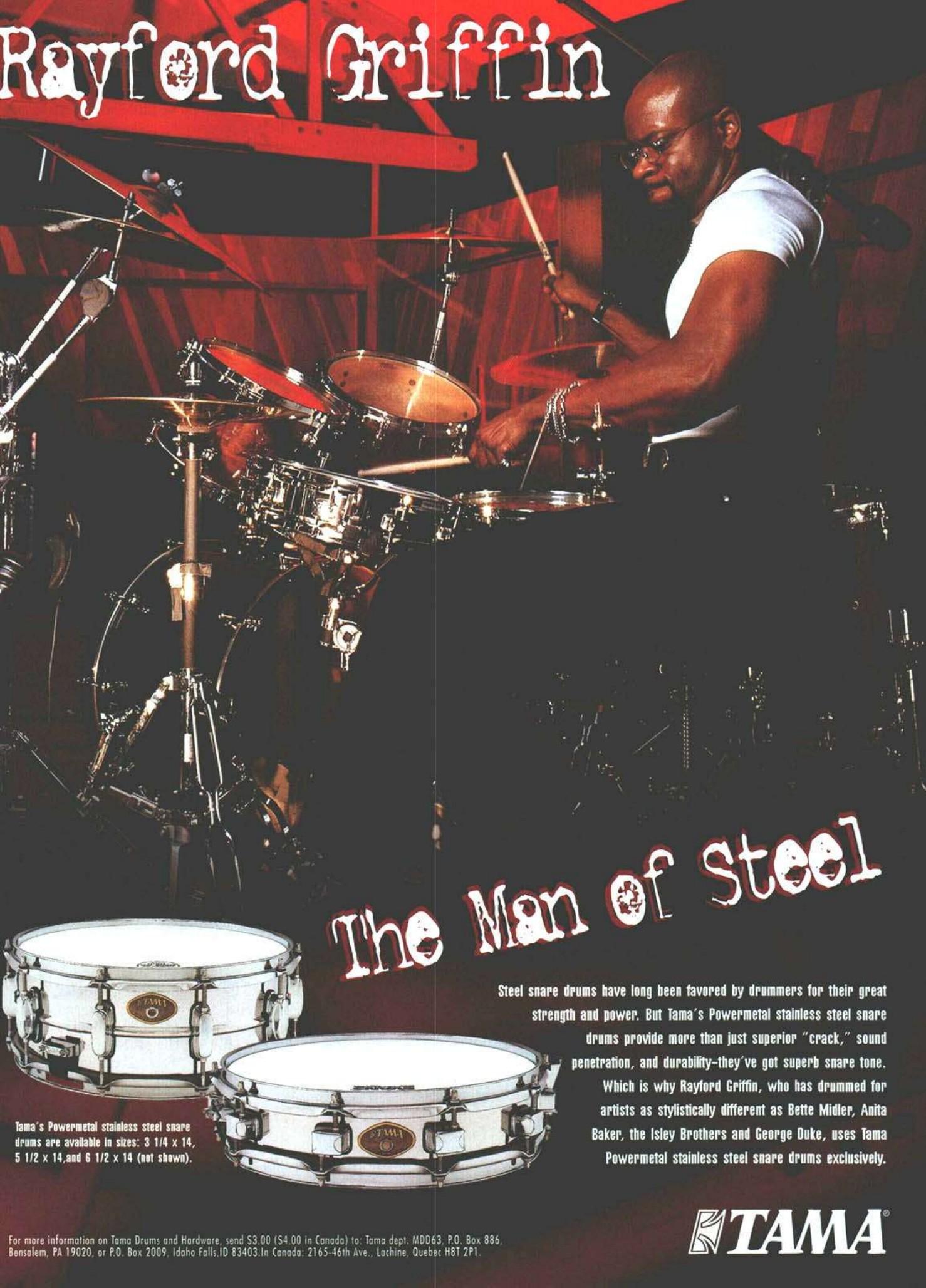
## Securing Floor Tom Legs

The tension screw on one of my floor tom's leg brackets stripped out as I was setting up for a recent performance. I made it through by slipping a thick rubber band around that leg, wrapping it around the leg several times until it was *almost* tight, and then sliding the band to the bottom of the stripped bracket, even with the other two legs. I then drew a couple of strands of the rubber band over one of the "ears" of the bracket's wing bolt, to keep the rubber band from sliding down the leg as I played. It got me through the night successfully. (I've since started carrying a spare leg bracket with me. They're less than \$10, don't take up much room in a hardware bag, and offer a sense of security. If your kit is more than a couple of years old, maybe you should think about carrying a couple of brackets, too.)

Larry Kennedy  
Albany, GA

*Note: The tips presented in Drumline are suggestions based on the personal experience of individual drummers, and are not necessarily endorsed or recommended by Modern Drummer magazine. Modern Drummer cannot guarantee that any problem will be solved by any Drumline suggestion, and cannot be responsible for any damage to equipment or personal injury resulting from the utilization of any such suggestion. Readers are encouraged to consider each suggestion carefully before attempting to utilize any Drumline tip.*

# Rayford Griffin



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Which is why Rayford Griffin, who has drummed for artists as stylistically different as Bette Midler, Anita Baker, the Isley Brothers and George Duke, uses Tama Powermetal stainless steel snare drums exclusively.



Tama's Powermetal stainless steel snare drums are available in sizes: 3 1/4 x 14, 5 1/2 x 14, and 6 1/2 x 14 (not shown).

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 **TAMA**

**Craig Michael Pilo**

Craig Pilo of Germantown, Maryland spends a good deal of his drumming time cruising. That doesn't mean he hasn't been working hard; on the contrary, he's been exceptionally busy. It's just that a lot of that business has taken place aboard ship. Since 1992 Craig has played in bands for the Carnival, Norwegian, and Princess cruise lines, backing shows and acts and covering a multitude of musical styles. When his feet were on dry ground, Craig backed former members of the Platters, the Lettermen, and the Coasters on solo tours. He's also done big band work with the Dallas Jazz Orchestra and Bill Tillman (formerly of Blood, Sweat & Tears), and he's played behind impressionist Jim Bailey.

Craig is also active in professional and community theater, with productions of *Evita*, *Annie*, *Godspell*, *Big River*, *42nd Street*, and *A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum* among his many pit drumming credits. And on top of all of this, he manages to maintain a private teaching practice whenever he's "in port."

Craig's combination of style, technique, and musical taste (amply displayed on his demo tape) was honed at the University of North Texas, further shaped by private study with Ed Soph, Alan Dawson, and Jeff Hamilton, and influenced by the playing of Jeff Porcaro, Bernard Purdie, and Buddy Rich. He plies his skills on a Yamaha Maple Custom kit.

According to Craig, "I've recently been working on a solo project—but that will come about as it can. In the meantime, my future plans are to continue to pursue a freelance career."



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**Michelle McEntee Longstaff**

"Anything and everything!" is how twenty-five-year-old Michelle Longstaff describes her playing styles. "I enjoy pop/rock, Brit-pop, jazz, funk, R&B, blues alternative, dance/Top-40, classical, and concert music." That's good, considering that Michelle's current drumming activities include two original bands (Dust Radio and Lack Tripper) and a lot of freelance work in the Vancouver, Canada area. She also recently completed a three-month tour with an all-female Top-40 band in Abu Dhabi, in the United Arab Emirates. "Four female musicians in the Middle East was quite an experience," says Michelle.

Study at the Musicians Institute in London, a variety of musical-theater playing, and studio work with Nettwerk record-



ing artists Suzanne Little and Tara McLean helped prepare Michelle for her most recent project, a self-titled CD release from Dust Radio. Her playing on that recording provides both energetic support and tasteful color to the group's creative pop/rock style.

Michelle plays a "hybrid" kit consisting of Gretsch, Pearl, and Yamaha drums mounted on a Gibraltar rack. She also employs a variety of Sabian and Paiste cymbals. "I'm influenced by Manu Katche and Stewart Copeland," says Michelle, "so I like to use lots of cymbals."

Michelle plans to continue playing with as many groups as she can in order to gain as much experience as possible. As she puts it, "Variety keeps me creative and keeps me learning."

**Sam Kallaos**

According to Sam Kallaos, of Nixa, Missouri, diversity is what makes him a valuable commodity as a drummer. Starting out strictly in rock, Sam branched out into jazz, country, R&B, and other styles. "If I'd studied one thing all my life," he says, "my sound would be generic. Instead, it's full of influences and styles. I go from Metallica to Mozart."

Sam's diversity has allowed him to play with a variety of artists and bands throughout the Midwest. He also had the opportunity to back noted jazz artist John Pizzarelli Jr. at the 1994 Montreaux Jazz Festival (when Sam was touring

Europe with a college group). "I realized that night that I could play professionally without any intimidation factor," he recalls. "I felt like I'd come of age; now it was time to go out and do it."



Sam's been "doing it" ever since, developing a resume of performance and recording credits that ultimately led to his current gig as drummer for violinist/entertainer Shoji

Tabuchi at Shoji's own theater in Branson, Missouri. He also teaches privately, and performs at local Boys & Girls Clubs, introducing kids to drums. His own influences include Steve Gadd, "Zigaboo"

Modeliste, Dennis Chambers, Elvin Jones, Jeff Porcaro, Phil Collins, Willie Green, John Bonham, and Louie Bellson.

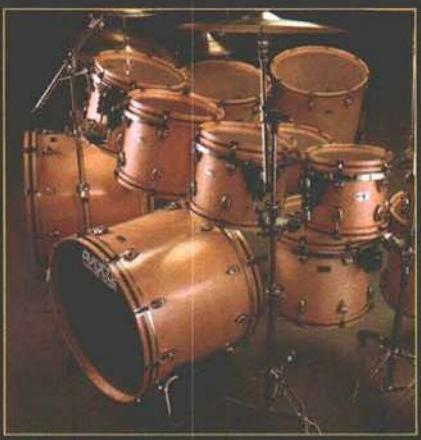
Sam plays an early '80s Gretsch kit or a Yamaha kit (depending on the gig) with a variety of Gretsch and Yamaha snare drums, Zildjian cymbals,

Roland electronics, a Gibraltar rack, and Tama Iron Cobra double pedals. His goals are simple: "I want to be a great clinician and a noteworthy road drummer."

you do and how you do it, and a list of the equipment you use regularly. Send your material to *On The Move*, Modern Drummer Publications, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Material **cannot** be returned, so please **do not** send original tapes or photos.



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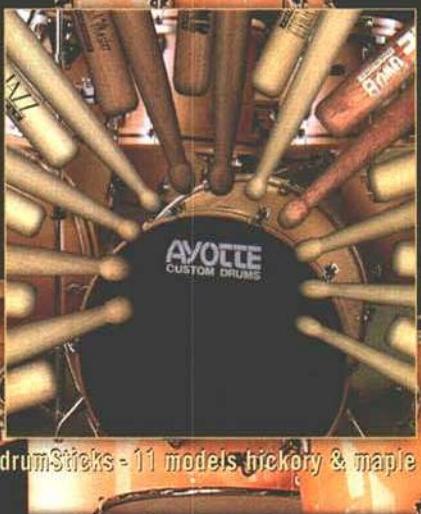
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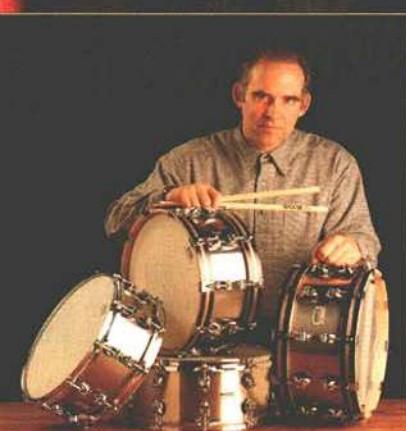
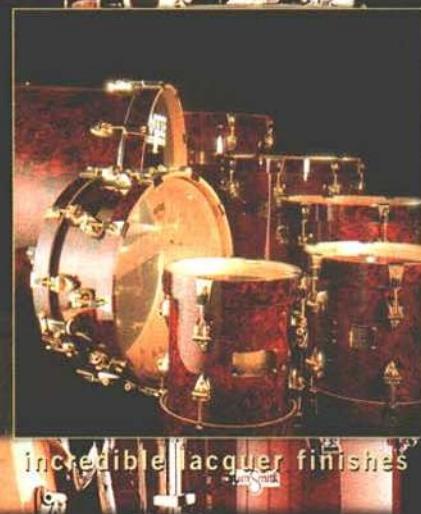
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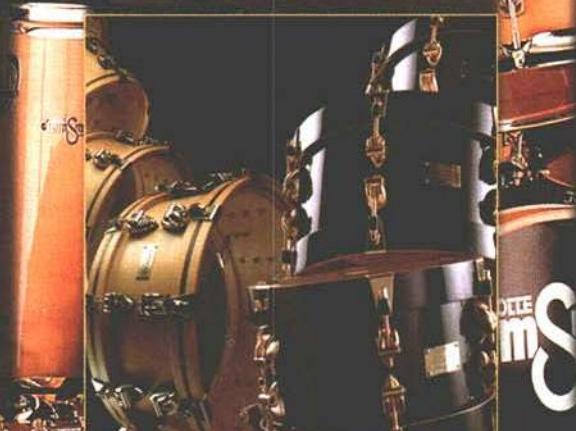
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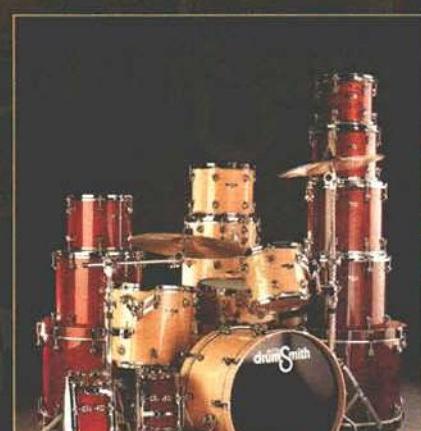
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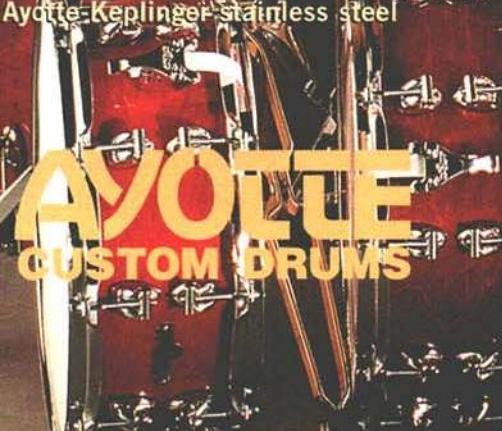
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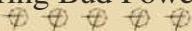
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## RECORDINGS

**Chick Corea & Friends**  
Remembering Bud Powell (Stretch)

drummer: Roy Haynes

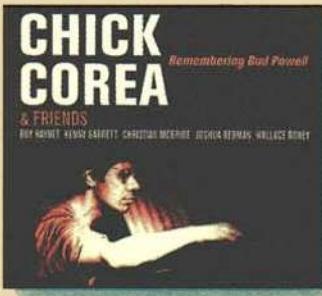
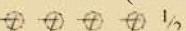
with Chick Corea (pno), Kenny Garrett (al sx), Christian McBride (bs),  
Joshua Redman (tn sx), Wallace Roney (trp)

If listeners detect a unique historical aura to the performances on this CD, it's probably because Roy Haynes is the drummer who originally performed these tunes with Bud Powell some fifty years ago. Undoubtedly, Haynes is the cohesive factor here, allowing the music to feel authentic through every aspect of his performance.

Listening to Haynes is a lesson in using the drum-set as a tonal instrument, concentrating on the embellishment of melody and form. Several short and tasty musical conversations here between Chick and Haynes highlight the drummer's solid judgment; notably, "Oblivion" allows both legendary players to share their generations of insightful improvisation. On "Tempus Fugit" Haynes makes the opening statement, then proceeds to forge a burning trail of unrelenting bop, expressing himself again later in the tune.

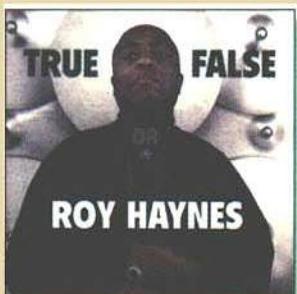
Not as abrasive as Elvin or Max, Haynes just flows as if to say, "This is my house. I grew up here, this is where I was born." By tapping the strengths of several of today's young lions, Chick Corea has formed a perfect union of stylistic generations that come together in harmonic perfection. Bud would be proud. (*Stretch Records, 2635 Griffith Park Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90039*)

Mike Haid

**Roy Haynes**  
True Or False (Evidence)

drummer: Roy Haynes

with David Kikoski (pno), Ralph Moore (tn sx), Ed Howard (bs)



Give us a break, Roy! You've got that Peter Pan syndrome, staying stubbornly young. You're still playing with more passion, spontaneity, and inventiveness than most young jazz firebrands. What's a boomer to do? What's an X'er to do? Guess we all have to backpedal and learn from the masters—and then *keep on* learning from them.

Can't help thinking of that night years ago when a club-goer kept shouting at an on-fire soloist, "Don't be so bad! Don't be so bad!"

Jeff Potter

**Don Byron**  
Bug Music (Nonesuch)

drummers: Billy Hart, Joey Baron, Pheeroan akLaff

with Don Byron (clr, bar sx), Steve Wilson (al sx), Robert DeBellis (tn sx),  
Charles Lewis, Steve Bernstein (trp), Kenny Davis (bs), others

Don Byron's *Bug Music* explores the repertoires of three groundbreaking bands that helped widen the scope of jazz in the '20s and '30s: Duke Ellington's Cotton Club Orchestra, the Raymond Scott Quintette, and the John Kirby Orchestra. In his liner notes, Byron says the

**SIGNIFICANT OTHERS**

Immediately likable and deep with ideas, *Tidy* by X25 (formerly Xanax 25) features the drumming of **ROB COURNOYER**, who nails this great young band's mood swings from catchy, heartfelt pop to heavy, growling ballads. (*Paradigm Records, 67 living Place South, 3rd FL, New York, NY 10003*)

Rocker Glen Burtnik kicks out eighteen fresh heartland rock songs on *Palookaville*, with strong, smart support from drummer **PAT PETRILLO**. (*Deko Music, 2 Engle St., Tenafly, NJ 07670*)

Soul, hip-hop, R&B, and jazz are all part of Greazy Meal's confection, with a nod to (and two members of) the New Power Generation. Their new CD, *Visualize World Greaze*, features the slick and slippery sticks of **DAVE ANANIA**. (*P.O. Box 13314, Dinkytown Station, Minneapolis, MN 55414-5314*)

**HERB GRAHAM, JR.** plays songwriter, rapper—and highly tuned-in drummer—on the B Sharp Jazz Quartet's swinging *Searching For The One* (MAMA).

The minimal Cash Money (two-piece band, three-piece drumkit) do a lot with a little, and drummer **SCOTT GIAMPINO** shows a bucketful of soul and a truckload of fun on this distortion-loving, muck-slinging outfit's debut, *Black Hearts And Broken Wills* (Touch And Go).

**Rating Scale**

⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ⊕	Excellent
⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ⊕	Very Good
⊕ ⊕ ⊕	Good
⊕ ⊕	Fair
⊕	Poor

common thread between these groups is "their love of the hemiola, unusual chord progressions, minutely detailed arrangements, and their ability to explore the talents of individual bandmembers." Also evident in the compositions here is the influence of concepts and themes borrowed from classical music. This is complex, tricky stuff, but don't be fooled: The spirit of whimsy and fun prevails over the whole album.



Billy Hart, who drums on the first half of the album, emphasizes classy brush work and smooth swinging on the ride cymbal. On "Wondering Where," his precise accents bring the arrangement to life, and his elegant classical-style tom-tom rolls (played with mallets) on "Charley's Prelude" perfectly enhance the unhurried dance tempo of the tune. Hart also plays on the final track, "SNIBOR," an extended blues jam where he gets the chance to dig in a little deeper and drop some bombs.

If Raymond Scott, whose music is central to Carl Stalling's Warner Bros, cartoon scores, were still leading a band, there's no doubt that Joey Baron, who assumes the throne for all the Scott material on this LP, would be his drummer. Scott would certainly appreciate Joey's use of cowbells, wood blocks, and drum rims, which are beautifully exploited here. And let's not forget one of Joey's most striking assets: his sense of humor. In between swinging with speed and finesse on "Powerhouse," Baron will crack you up with one well-placed rimshot or cymbal choke. His arsenal also includes crisp tom-tom patterns ("War Dance For Wooden Indians") and jingle bells ("Siberian Sleighride").

Rounding out the drum lineup is Pheeroan akLaff, whose march-like snare rolls on Ellington's "The Dicty Glide" help give the track an orchestral feel. And his snare and splash accents on the cut-time "Cotton Club Stomp" propel the tune with a light, jovial touch.

**Michael Parillo**

## Vision Of Disorder

Vision Of Disorder (Roadrunner)



**drummer: Brendon Cohen**

with Matt Baumbach, Mike Kennedy (gtr),  
Mike Fleischmann (bs), Tim Williams (vcl)

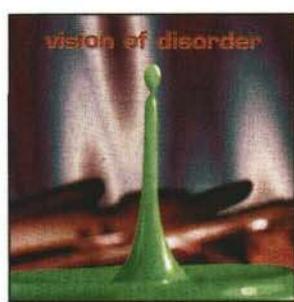
On one level, this is simply one more in an endless string of grungy funk-metal bands. But critics wouldn't so quickly dismiss this supposedly tired style if more artists created the kind of

inspired sounds dished out by Vision Of Disorder.

Despite the emphasis on riff and groove, it's impossible to paint this Massachusetts band into any one corner. Killer vocalist Tim Williams shifts on a dime from Cobain to Staley to Anselmo, while his bandmates seamlessly move between an onslaught of time and tempo changes. Through it all, Vision

Of Disorder maintains the all-important foundation of song structure.

Drummer Brendon Cohen has a lot to do with that, effortlessly going with the flow of the band's guitar-driven rhythmic



changes, yet never letting the energy dip below head-banging level. Cohen spends much of the record exploring the beat possibilities of the kick, snare, and ride hand, only turning to his toms and second kick to add spice one bar at a time. By no means is it a boring approach, though, and Cohen shows a knack for knowing when to layer on some texture, such as his ride cymbal accents and flashes of splash on "Viola."

Rhythmic subtlety is just one of the band's strengths. It may not make Vision Of Disorder a household name, but then again, few good bands of this ilk are getting mass exposure anyway. So buy this record, rock out, and let's have it be our little secret.

**Matt Peiken**

## Vail Johnson

Says Who (Lucky)



**drummer: Bruce Carter**

**percussionist: Ron Powell**

with Vail Johnson (bs, gtr), Frankie Crawford, Roger Sause (kybd), Eric Marienthal (al sx), Brian Ray (gtr)

Speed-funk bassist Vail Johnson has come up with his best solo effort yet with *Says Who*, with lots of help from drummer Bruce Carter. The pair have good, playful fun remaking rock standards like "Green Eyed Lady" and funk staples like "Glide," and pay equally effective tribute to two other legends with "Parliamentary Procedure" and "Rufus." Carter has a great touch on the hi-hat and a lively snap on his snare, and it's that "pop" that saves smooth tunes like "Na Na Na" from turning to mush. Such natural groovesmanship also fits in solidly with Johnson's percussive bass work.

A few cuts stand out:

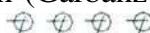
"Soundcheck" is cutting-edge instrumental funk, just pure joy of playing. Carter's halting syncopations set up the finale of "Glide," and he spars to highlight the out-vamp of "Procedure." "Says Who" starts like an early David Sanborn track, from the days when Marcus Miller was crunching it and Gadd was

laying down his heavy imprint. Here the musicians show off all the while, but the real fun is in Carter getting solo choruses just like the other players—and making them work. A fun, kicking release. (*Lucky Records, 10 NW 6th, Portland, OR 97209*)

**Robin Tolleson**

## Blüth

Blüth (Garbanzobean)



**drummers: Zach Danziger (also programming, vcl, hysteria), Fete Davenport (also perc, vcl, monologues)**

with Tim Lefebvre (bs, programming, Rhodes, vcl, kybd), plus guests Chuck Loeb, Leni Stern, Anton Fig, Andy Middleton, Dave Jensen, Lincoln Goines, Wayne Krantz, Mitch Forman, Steve Tavaglione, Sylvester Lightpocket

Every so often a record melds fusion, rock, and hip-hop into an insane audio trip like no other. Listening to Blüth (pronounced *bloodh*), you might think *Joe's Garage*-era Frank Zappa, or perhaps a psychotic Sid Caesar working the Catskills with a band of mental outpatients—or maybe a circus freak show covering *Bitches Brew*. Drawing on their insider's connections in the music biz and a rampant sampling affection, Blüth turns

genre-crossing into a comic-music skit of delirious proportions.

You may know Zach Danziger from his recent *MD* feature or his playing with Wayne Krantz, Michael Camilo, and Leni Stern. But to hear him here is... well... to be scared of him. Zach's drumming is all blistering chops and quirky-time dysfunction, but it's his sense of humor that erupts maliciously here, informing Blüth with creative mayhem. With Pete Davenport adding twisted dialogs and Tim Lefebvre on bass and assorted instruments, Blüth challenge your ears, morals, and senses. "...So I Said," for instance, features Davenport in gleeful inspiration, blathering on about the Queen Mary, *Parcheesi*, and "Marty's leftover panties after a date with Bill." "Very Good" boils with Miles-ish trumpet and saxophone over squirming hip-hop with Beavis-like burps and slurs. Blüth are obviously contemptuous of boundaries, blending trypno-jazz-fusion trio with bent-time hip-hop ("Sox Are On"), monosyllabic samples over ethereal drum & bass ("You Dig"), and bizarre drum solos over murky funk ("The Boom Tune").

Ultimately, Blüth may be too much for the common man, with talk of things like "circumcised pigs" likely to scare many. But if you want mad drumming, mad humor, and even madder music, Blüth will happily explode your skull. (*Available from Audiophile Imports, [410] 628-7601*)

Ken Micallef



## Dave Stores & The Tone Sharks

Report From A Log (Louie Records)

⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ½

drummer, percussionist: **Dave Storrs**

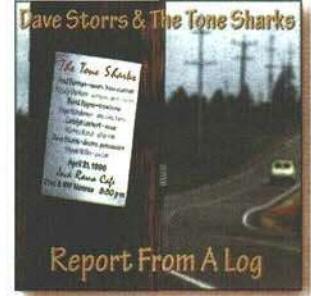
with Page Hundemer (bs), Steve Willis (gtr, bs), Brent Heyne (tbn), Fred Herman (bs clr), Troy Grugett (bar sx, al sx), Warren Rand (al sx), Wancy Durham (talking drum), others

This is good, ortbeat acid jazz from Colorado, all written by drummer/percussionist Dave Storrs. Chops are good all around the band, but the emphasis here is on ensemble playing, laying back, listening, reacting, and getting out of the witty angles in Storrs' music.

There's nothing forced or rushed about these grooves. On "Ignition" they lay particularly fine, as Storrs plays percussion and rims intently under the organ. And his combination of drums, bells, and shakers offers guidance and opportunity on the Latin funk of "Lozenge" and underneath the cool vocal on the Zappa-esque "It'll Come To Me."

For further proof of Storrs' disrespect of musical genres, there's the hip-hop feel of "Cub Scout Barbeque," the odd grace and beauty of "Stand At The Middle," and the unfolding melody and steamrolling groove of "I Don't Know." On this last tune, a soprano coos and baritone sax honks, as Storrs' hand drums carry it for the first chorus, then the whole kit kicks in with strong and steady drumming alongside some excellent conga work. Funny, heady stuff. (*Louie Records, 644 SW Fifth St., Corvallis, OR 97333*)

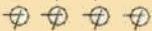
Robin Tolleson



## BOOKS

### Peter Erskine

My Book  
(IMP)



level: beginner to advanced

\$23.98

Peter Erskine's amazing life in music is celebrated in this hardback coffee table-style book. Rick Mattingly's biography is complete down to small details, like the drummer impressing the higher-ups at a Stan Kenton Music Camp so much that they accepted him as a student at the age of seven. Erskine is quoted candidly about the various band-leaders he's worked under, from Kenton to Ferguson to Zawinul, and the freedom he felt in joining the more musically democratic Steps Ahead, and then Bass Desires.

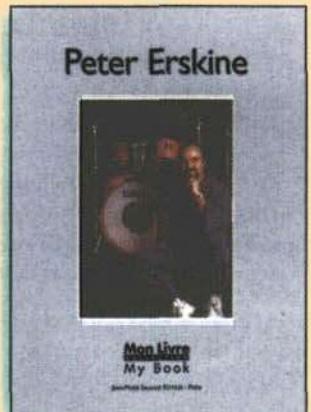
One of the book's real treats is its collection of photos, most of which are from the Erskine family scrapbook. There's the seven-year-old Peter studying next to Louis Hayes; a long-haired, bearded Erskine flailing away at his first Kenton gig; the drummer with his proud father in front of a Maynard Ferguson tour poster. Happily, the book shows (and Erskine's words bear out) that it's possible to be one of the world's best drummers while maintaining a loving relationship with parents, wife, and children.

Also included are transcriptions of many of the drum-

mer's compositions from his solo albums and recordings with Steps Ahead and others. These are not just drum parts, though, but lead sheets that can be followed to get the entire musical picture. (Adventurous drummers can invent their own parts.)

Also included is Erskine's personal warm-up routine, as first shown to the drummer by professor George Gaber at Indiana University in 1966. Finally, there's a discography of 243 titles Erskine has performed on, and a videography of nine titles.

*My Book* is a complete look at the drumming life of this important player, still only forty-two years old. My only complaint is with the inside spiral binding, which I can only assume was used for ease of viewing the transcriptions, but which may not hold up as well over time as a regular binding.

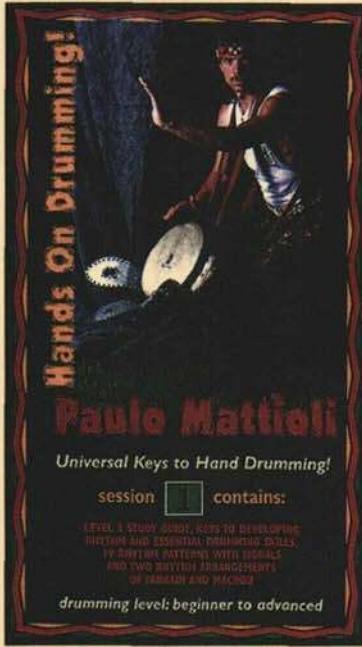


Robin Tolleson

## VIDEOS

**Paulo Mattioli**  
Hands On Drumming!  
(African Percussion, six videos)

level: beginner to advanced  
\$29.98, 60 minutes each



Paulo Mattioli's latest video series follows in the footsteps of his first release, *West African Djembe Drumming*. Each video opens with a group performance that quickly captures the attention of the listener with tight interplay and featured dancers. On video 1 we get an explanation of the playing position and proper method of holding the djembe. Mattioli then goes on to demonstrate the different tones on the drum, which are bass, tone, and slap. Subsequent videos go into greater detail on various rhythms.

Mattioli uses the See It, Sing It, Play It audio/visual system, which makes it quick and easy to learn the rhythms presented here. He also employs a West African oral tradition of the Yoruba people, which assigns a syllable to each tone on the drum. For example, the syllable "gun" denotes a bass tone with the right hand, and "go" stands for an open tone with the same hand. Exercises are provided for the development of the sounds, and the "Player's Eye View"

camera shots make it easy to follow the patterns on the screen.

Also demonstrated is the use of drum signals, which are the key to opening and closing the rhythms. Mattioli plays the signal and introduces the individual parts one at a time. Then the ensemble adds each part as dictated by the signals, until all parts are being played. Such isolation of the individual parts makes it very easy to understand the total picture.

Mattioli is an articulate educator with a definite system for teaching West African drumming. His enthusiasm for teaching is clear, and the production quality here is excellent, all of which makes this video series a very attractive introduction to the field of hand drumming.

Victor Rendon

**Paulo Mattioli**  
Skin It...Tune It...Play It  
Universal Guide To Reheading  
And Tuning Your Hand Drum  
(African Percussion)

level: beginner to advanced  
\$39.95, 60 minutes

This instructional tape is a "hands-on," step-by-step demonstration of reheading and tuning a hand drum. Using a djembe to demonstrate nearly the entire process of mounting and tensioning the head, Mattioli starts with a description of the materials and tools needed to do the job. He then proceeds with the selection of a good skin, removal of worn-out skin, and preparation of the hoop. A demonstration of soaking the skin, removing animal hair, tucking the skin, and lacing the drum follows. Finally, he takes great care in showing how to tune the drum. The close-up video shots are very helpful in viewing the process, and Mattioli continually stresses patience and attention to detail while demonstrating each step. He also provides excellent pointers that will result in a well-tucked skin with the proper sound. With careful study of this video and some patience, you can learn all the skills needed to rehead and tune your own drum for a fraction of the cost of an outsourced repair.

Victor Rendon

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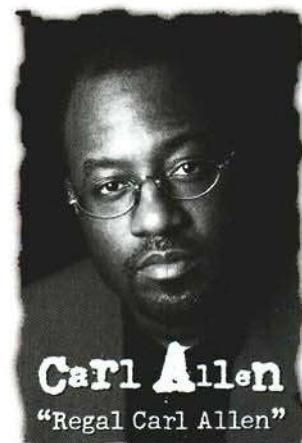
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## "A Work In Progress" Contest Winners Announced

The Neil Peart "A Work In Progress" Contest that appeared in the November, December, and January issues of *Modern Drummer* was concluded this past January 9 with the drawing of winners' names from about 90,000 postcard entries and 8,900 telephone entries. The contest was sponsored by Drum Workshop, Zildjian, DCI, and *Modern Drummer*. Grand-prize winner Richard Hewitt of Old Bridge, New Jersey won a complete DW/Zildjian drumset like the one used by Neil Peart during the filming of the DCI video *A Work In Progress*, plus a box-set of that video. The package's retail value is \$14,000. Second-prize winners Manny Castaneda of El Paso, Texas and David Conaway of Deer Park, Texas were each awarded a Neil Peart cymbal setup and the *Progress* video, each package valued at \$2,900. The following twenty-five third-prize winners each won the video, valued at \$59.95: Scott Foster, Colleen Coveney, Scott Kautzer, Steve Flores, Jose Medeles, David Boteler, Mark Petitta, Jonathan K. Smith, Jeff Brown, Dan Martin, Russel Morse, Keith Mulhare, Joe D. McAdams Jr., David Wilkinson, Douglas "Dean" Metzger, Roger Marchant, Rob Muller, John Schwarz, Brant Parsons, Tim Montgomery, Chris Bastien, Eric Dalpiaz, Tom Wetherorn, Michael B. Laib, and Tom Rodriguez. Congratulations from Drum Workshop, Zildjian, DCI, and *Modern Drummer* to all the winners!

## Indy Quickies

Pro-Mark Corporation founder and chairman **Herb Brochstein** sold the company to his son, Maury, this past January. "Naturally," says Herb, "I will help him whenever I can—as a consultant, and as a father. But Maury has really been running the company since he was elected president over a year ago. Furthermore, this was a real transaction; I didn't sell it to him for a dollar or some token amount. Maury went to the bank and signed a note. It's really up to him to make this work. The success of this company rests with him."

**Zildjian** recently opened a new performance center at its Norwell, Massachusetts headquarters. The center combines auditorium capability with extensive memorabilia and archival photography displays. "Artifacts" include drumsets owned by Gene Krupa and Louie Bellson, and a desk that Avedis Zildjian used at the company's first U.S. factory in Quincy, Massachusetts. The center's photography chronicles visits by such legendary drummers as Krupa, Chick Webb, Jo Jones, Dave Tough, and Buddy Rich, as well as living legends (who still visit) such as Bellson, Max Roach, and Roy Haynes.

According to Craigie Zildjian, the company's general manager for North America, "We really needed a place where we could present master classes and clinics to students. We wanted to make sure that a visit to the Zildjian factory would be a truly educational experience where young drummers could learn not only how the

instruments are made, but where they came from." The new center has already been put to use for visits by the Manhattan School of Music and the Hartt School of Music. Two master classes have featured Zildjian clinicians Gary Chaffee and Neil Grover.

**Pearl Drums** will now distribute **Adams Musical Instrument Company** timpani and mallet instruments exclusively in the United States. Celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary, the Dutch company began as a timpani manufacturer in 1971, and began extensive research into mallet instruments in 1985—resulting in some of the best-selling xylophones and marimbas in the world. According to Pearl marketing manager for marching and concert percussion George Barrett, "Adams products will play a big part in Pearl's ongoing commitment to total percussion products."

**Sabian** will expand its year-old presence in cyber-space with several feature upgrades and new pages. In addition to artist updates, product introductions, press releases, and the rest of the current site, Sabian now plans a dedicated educational site featuring information valuable to music educators. The addition of audio will enable drummers to hear some of their favorite drummers and percussionists play and discuss their Sabian cymbal setups. The company also plans to expand their dealer listing so players can find Sabian products in their area. And to better serve its expanding world market, Sabian will offer information in several languages.

In related news, **Sabian's** new international artist relations manager is Steve Oksenuk, who will work out of the company's East Coast office in Marshfield, Massachusetts. Artist relations activities for North America will be handled by Bobby Boos, who will be based on the West Coast in the Los Angeles area.

Finally, Sabian has announced that it will again provide name and product support to the **Miller Band** Program. Created by the Miller Brewing Company in the mid-'80s to introduce and promote "talent deserving wider recognition," this year's lineup will include as many as forty new names and six returning acts.

Meanwhile, **Anheuser/Busch** hopes to add fifteen local bands (for a total of forty-six sponsored acts) to its **Bud Family In-Concert Series** for 1997. In-Concert sponsors local bands representing all types of music and is continually looking for fresh, up-and-coming talent. Sponsored bands receive promotional materials, advertising, public relations, and financial and equipment sup-



Sabian's Bobby Boos (left) and Steve Oksenuk

port from such companies as **Yamaha Drums** and **Zildjian Cymbals**. Bands interested in becoming part of the program should send press kits and their latest release or demo, photos, a brief bio, press clippings, and a list of recent dates to In-Concert, 350 W. Hubbard, Suite 430, Chicago, IL 60610.

**Bison Drum** Company has a new area code. The Wheeling, Illinois company's correct telephone number is (847) 459-1255.

**Drum Workshop** is now on-line at [www.dwdrums.com](http://www.dwdrums.com), while **Creative Projects** (makers of the **PADD** and **PAD-L** practice pads) can be found on the net at <http://fp.digiweb.com.creaproj>.

**Jim Casella** (Santa Clara Vanguard Drum & Bugle Corps percussion coordinator) and **Julie Davila** (percussion specialist, John Overton High School, Nashville) have been added to Pearl's clinician staff.

## UK Drummer's Alliance Celebrates 10th Anniversary

Drummer's Alliance is an organization founded ten years ago in England to promote the art of drums and percussion. Since then, Drummer's Alliance has sponsored four national drum competitions, plus regular workshops and seminars for Remo drums, Sabian cymbals, and Vic Firth drumsticks.

The idea of the drum competitions is to allow drummers to explore their abilities in a solo situation, and thus help improve their musical confidence. One of the winners in the most recent competition was Chris Bailey, who has gone on to work with such artists as Chaka Khan, Coolio, and Eternal. Another competition is planned for the fall of 1997.

This year Drummer's Alliance will also introduce an educational audiotape called *The Creative Practice Tape For Intermediate To Advanced Drummers*. Designed to make practice both fun and motivational, the "A" side features Alliance founder Toni Cannelli playing drums to four compositions in a variety of styles. The "B" side has the same music, minus the drums. Cannelli will be touring the UK and Canada later this year giving workshops/seminars and promoting the tape.

For further information contact Drummer's Alliance, 261 Western Rd., Crookes, Sheffield, S10 1LE, England, tel: (0114) 268-4678.

## Endorsement News

New Premier artists include **Martin Chambers** (Pretenders), **Tommy Cunningham** (Wet Wet Wet), **Paul Cook** (Sex Pistols), **Ed's Chesters** (Bluetones), and **Ged Lynch** (Black Grape).

**Pat Mastelotto** (King Crimson) and **Jody Linscott** (the Who) are using Fredrico Percussion products.

New endorsers for Pearl drums include **Scott Rockenfield** (Queensryche), **Nick Menza** (Megadeth), **Gene Lake** (Me'Shell Ndegeocello), **Don Guillaume** (Fugees), **Randy Hutchinson** (Keith Sweat), **Jeff Bryant** (Ricochet), and **Danny Schuler** (Biohazard).

Artists now on Grover Pro Percussion's roster include Carmine

and Vinny Appice, **Bobby Rondinelli** (Black Sabbath), **Alan Estes** (L.A. studio), **Zoro** (Frankie Valli), **Andy James** (NYC studio), and **Boo Boo McAfee** (Eric Hamilton Band, Nashville studio)—all using the *Performance Snare System*. On Grover's *Performance* drumsets are **Craig Sala** (Joni's Butterfly), **Marc Poitras** (NYC show drummer), **Steve Luongo** (Mountain, John Entwistle), and **John Hazilla** (Boston jazz drummer and teacher). Playing Grover *Pro Percussion* products are **Vicki Randall** (*Tonight Show*), **Jody Linscott** (the Who), **Evelyn Glennie**, **Airto**, **James "Theo" Theobold** (Julio Iglesias), **Randy Crafton**, and vibist **Jon Metzger**.

**Simon Phillips** is now endorsing Shure microphones.

Rock and Roll Hall Of Fame inductee **Dino Danelli** (the Rascals) is playing and endorsing Fibes *Crystalite* drums.

New Drum Workshop drum endorsers include **Abe Juckles** (Treehouse), **Toby Scarborough** (Chalk Farm), and **Daniel Glass** (Royal Crown Revue). Playing **DW** pedals are **Adrian Young** (No Doubt), **David Silveria** (Korn), **Brendan Hill** (Blues Traveler), and **Tony Coleman** (B.B. King).

Drummers now playing Zildjian cymbals include Sonny Emory (Earth, Wind & Fire), **Chad Sexton** (311), **Billy Mason** (Tim McGraw), **Billy Martin** (Medeski, Martin & Wood), **Shayne Phillips** (Tracy Bonham), **Glen Caruba** (Glen Frey), **Gerry Brown** (Stevie Wonder), **Peter Criss** (KISS), **Tony Royster Jr.** (solo artist), **Ginger Fish** (Marilyn Manson), **Ben Mize** (Counting Crows), **Carola Grey** and **Tony Reedus** (recording artists), and **Eddy Anderson** (Patty Loveless).



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## ADVERTISER INDEX

ADVERTISER	PAGE NUMBER	ADVERTISER	PAGE NUMBER	ADVERTISER	PAGE NUMBER
Applied Microphone Technology (AMT)	157	Humes & Berg	62/63	The Parziale Corp.	144
Atlanta Drums & Percussion	157	Husher International, Ltd.	157	Pearl Corporation	12/13,54,92,107,Inside Back Cover
Atlanta Pro Percussion	125	Intelnet	115	Peavey Drums	82/83
Ayotte	149	Interstate Musician Supply	112	Percussion Ergonomic Developers (P.E.D.)	56/57
Berklee College of Music	10	Joe Morello	36	Percussive Arts Society (PAS)	111
Breinholt Music & Sound/Meinl	159	K&K Sound Systems	133	Precision Drum Co.	128
Cannon Percussion	36,68,95	KoSA '97 Int'l Percussion Workshop	96	Premier	5,72
Clear-Sonic Mfg.	36	Keller Products Inc.	25	ProMark	60,76,116
Creative Drummer Magazine	128	L.T. Lug Lock, Inc.	92	Pro Percussion	135
DCI/Note Service/Warner Bros.	47,129	Latin Percussion	81	Regal Tip	108,153
ddrum/Armadillo Enterprises	58	Long Island Drum Center	80	Remo	22,34/35
Disc Makers	144	Los Angeles Music Academy (LAMA)	155	Roc-N-Soc	133
Discount Distributors	144	Ludwig	Inside Front Cover	Roland	88/89
Drum Center of Lexington	128	Mainline	93	Sabian	26/27,29
The Drum Pad	144	Mapex	79	Sam Ash	98
Drum Tech	106	MD Drum Instructors Only	117	Sennheiser	24
Drum TV	141	MD Festival Weekend	118/119	Slingerland	11
Drum Workshop	59,61	MD Library	130/131	Super Gloss/Sam Barnard	10
Drum World	96	MD Progressive Independence	113	Skidmore Jazz Institute	58
Drummers Collective	91	MD Studio Survival Guide	145	Tama	16/17,28,78,99,114,147
Drums In The Wind	123	MD Subscriptions	109	Taws Drum Works	75
Drums On Sale	157	Meinl Percussion/Cymbals	7,9	Thoroughbred Music	36
Evans Products	1	Memphis Drum Shop	144	Toca	97
Fibes Drum Co.	80	Midwest Percussion	94	UDU Drums	80
Vic Firth, Inc.	55,121	The Music Industry Pages	157	UFIP Cymbals	37
Fork's Drum Closet	157	Music Tech	125	Vater Percussion	8,31,157
Gibraltar	134/135	Musicians Institute	70	West L.A. Music	133
Gretsch	112	Noble & Cooley	74	XL Specialty Percussion	159
Grover Pro Percussion	141	Orange County Drums & Percussion	90	Yamaha	30,77,141
HQ Percussion Products	110,144	Paiste	33,69,71,73	Zildjian	6,19,21,23,30,94,Outside Bxk Cover

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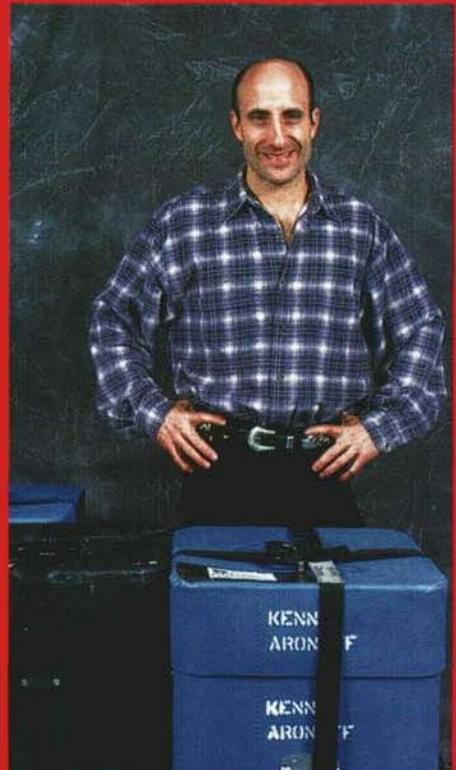


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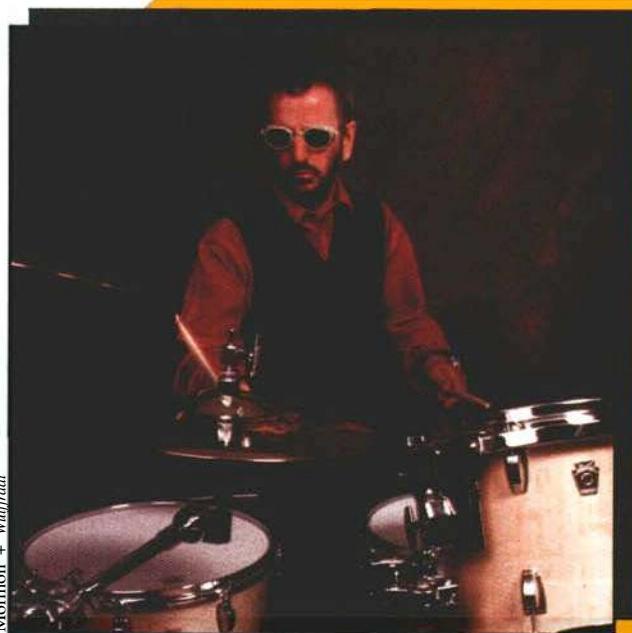
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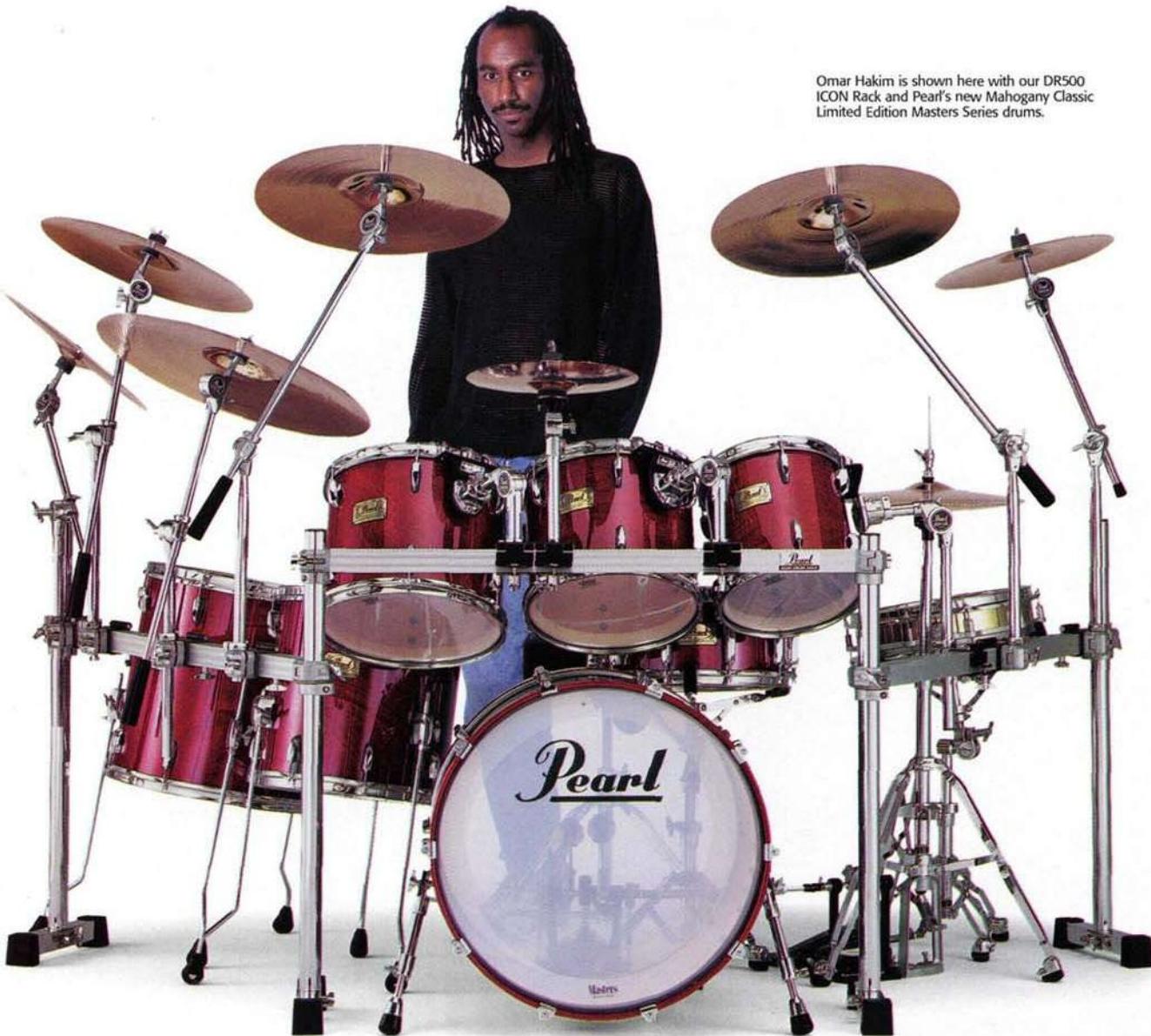
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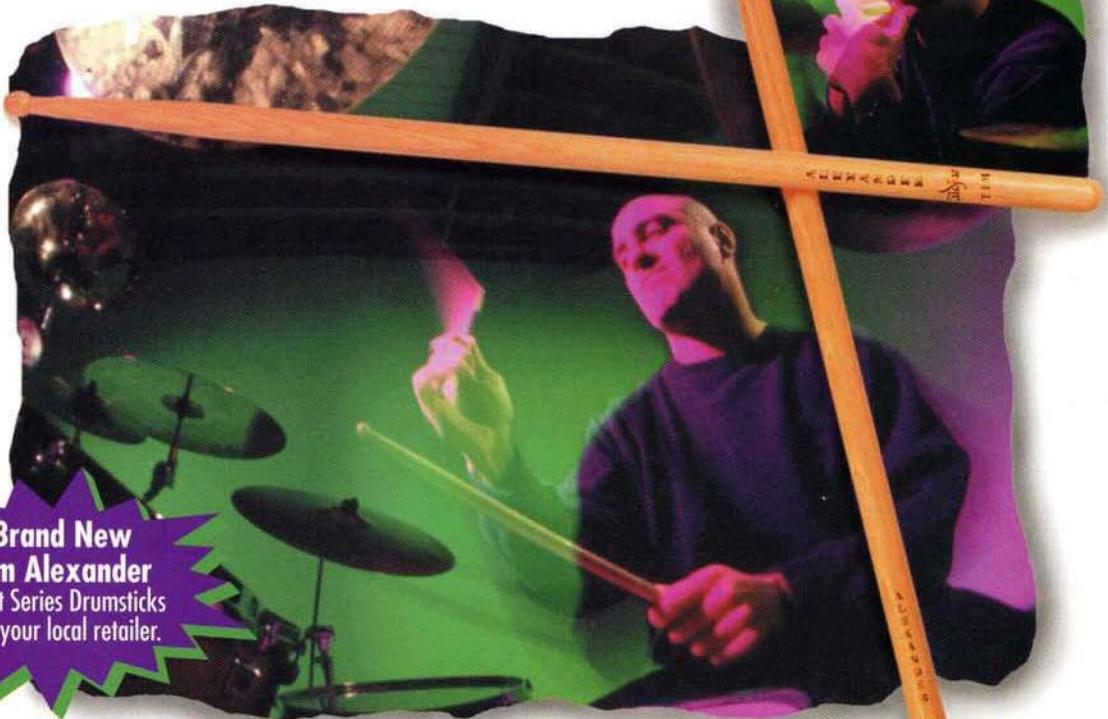


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